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Sgt. Pat Carlotto sues South Haven, claims discrimination

By James Windell

Sgt. Pat Carlotto, who had served as interim police chief for the South Haven Police Department in both 2024 and 2025, has sued the City of South Haven because he was not selected for the position of Police Chief.

The case Pat Carlotto v. City of South Haven (Case No. 1:25-cv-01557) was filed in the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Michigan on November 24, 2025, although it was only on December 5 that it came to light.

The lawsuit is a civil rights and employment discrimination complaint that alleges that Carlotto was

a target of retaliation and discriminatory treatment by being passed over for the permanent position of chief.

Carlotto, a 25-year veteran of the South Haven Police Department, was appointed interim police chief after Chief Natalie Thompson retired in September 2024. He held the role until Kevin Swope was hired in January 2025. After Chief Swope resigned just one month into his tenure, Carlotto was again named interim chief. He stepped in to lead the department while the city resumed its search for a permanent replacement. He served in that role until Dennis Honholt began serving as Chief on April 1, 2025. Honholt resigned a month later, but no interim police chief was named immediately. Sgt. Adam DeBoer was appointed interim chief near the end of April 2025 and was in that position until recently being promoted to Chief.

Carlotto contends in his suit that in 2022 he was a witness in a discrimination lawsuit filed by Officer Michaela Pauly against the City and the police chief Natalie Thompson. That case was settled later that year. Because Carlotto supported Pauly's case, he indicates that city officials later retaliated against him. Specifically, he alleges that during the 2025 police chief search the City told him he would not be hired due to "trust issues" and "too much baggage."

In the suit, he argues that being labeled as having "trust issues" and "too much baggage" was not a legitimate reason to deny him the chief role, but rather a pretext tied to his prior testimony.

The suit states that Carlotto had qualifications, credentials, and experience that far exceeded those of the persons the City ended up hiring as its chief of police. Furthermore, it is stated that the City refused to permanently appoint Carlotto to the chief of police position "despite his vastly superior qualifications, credentials, and experience."

Since the suit is filed under federal civil rights employment law, the complaint asserts that the city's actions violated his rights to fair employment practices.

In Pat Carlotto v. City of South Haven, Carlotto is asking for payment for lost wages, benefits, and emotional distress tied to being denied the chief position. In addition, he seeks to penalize the city for alleged retaliation and deter similar conduct in the future, and he is asking the court to order the city to install him as permanent police chief or provide equivalent reinstatement.

As reported elsewhere, a statement from the City said that officials don't comment on pending litigation. City Manager Kate Hosier told the media on December 5 that the City has yet to receive the lawsuit.

Wiley jet skis across Lake Michigan to Chicago

By James Windell

You never know what someone of a certain age and a little bit of both time and money will think of next.

Take Kirk Wiley for instance. He had a brainstorm. Which had to do with his jet ski.

"I wondered if I could jet ski to Chicago?" Wiley said the other night at a "movie premier" party at his house. "I did some test runs and figured out the fuel and I decided I would see if I could jet-ski to Chicago from South Haven."

So he set out in late June, 2025, to ride his Kawasaki Ultra310X jet ski to Chicago.

Coming off the high of succeeding in that round trip, he had another bright idea. "I wanted to take on another jet ski challenge," he says. "I had previously considered kayaking around the lake."

"Why not jet-ski around Lake Michigan?" he asked himself. He discussed it with his closest neighbors and his family. "My friends Sparky (Jeremy Buckingham) and Chainsaw (Chip Hudson) were convinced I was going to meet disaster," he remembers. "Their wives could not understand why I would do such hard things. My siblings saw this as the next in a long string of challenges that personify my desire to squeeze everything I can from this life."

His wife Jennifer wasn't thrilled at first. "Does everything have to be a competition?" she said. "But then she said, 'What do you need me to do?'"

Laying out his plan to Jennifer, he said he would start in the Black River and go north on Lake Michigan

to the Strait of Mackinac and then come back along Wisconsin, past Chicago and end up back in the Black River. Jennifer, who it is rumored is being considered for sainthood, agreed to drive along Lake Michigan and meet at various marinas on his route to help him fuel up, find food, and have a place to stay each night of the expected 3-day trip.

Although he recalls that when he talked about the Chicago crossing, he felt like it was more of a vanity project, in designing the big blue loop trip, he wanted to balance his adventurous spirit with his service spirit. He decided to make the trip and the video as a way of raising funds for Liteta, a rural settlement located in Chibombo District, Central Province of Zambia.

"Liteta has a growing population of over 10,000 people but the community faces chronic water shortages, especially during the dry season," Wiley says. "Most families rely on shallow, hand-dug wells and seasonal streams, which often dry up or become contaminated, leading to widespread cases of waterborne illnesses."

Wiley is planning to donate more than $20,000 he and Jennifer have raised to not only improve the water supply in Liteta, but to help the community develop a safe space where community members can gather for spiritual formation, educational workshops, youth activities, or skills training.

Not only did Wiley complete the 750-mile trip around Lake Michigan, but he made a video of his athletic endeavor. Called "Big Blue Loop," the almost 14-minute video was given its world premier at the party on December 2. The record of his Lake Michigan adventure, which he went on from September 15 to 17, 2025, was, he said before the movie was viewed by friends and neighbors for the first time, was not conceived to make him a hero for his feat.

"This video is tongue-in-cheek," Wiley said. "There are things in here where humor is pointed straight at me and you shouldn't hesitate to laugh."

As the video indicates, there were some dangers involved as Lake Michigan currents can be treacherous and never having sailed (or jet-skied) through the waters around the big lake he was not always sure where rocks were hiding. As he disembarks from his Kawasaki on Saturday, September 17, back in the Black River, the video clearly shows a fatigued man with a sunburned face who looks like he could collapse at any moment.

"Big Blue Loop" is available on YouTube and can be found at ttps://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RITqYrmIM0A

For information about donating to the Zambia project, go to Kirk's GoFundMe link at https://gofund.me/a14765928

Jazz Festival creator receives proclamation from South Haven

By James Windell

Larry Brown, who created and ran the South Haven Jazz Festival for the past eight years, was honored by Mayor Annie Brown with a Proclamation.

The proclamation was awarded to Brown at the South Haven City Council meeting on December 1, 2025.

Mayor Brown's proclamation honors Brown because "through his vision and passion for jazz music, created the South Haven Jazz Festival with the goal of sharing the joy, artistry, and cultural richness of jazz with the entire community."

The document also pays respect to Brown for devoting "countless volunteer hours to planning, organizing, and promoting this annual event, securing support from local businesses, grantors, and regional jazz organizations to ensure its continued success."

During the eight years of the jazz festival, that took place in Dyckman Park and in the Huron Street Pavilion, Brown brought in excellent local and regional jazz acts. By the second year, the festival had expanded lineups featuring multiple bands and combos. Although 2020 and 2021 saw a virtual festival one year and a cancellation the next because of the COVID-19 pandemic, it returned in full force following that with diverse performers, such as Lake Effect Jazz Big Band, Shout Section Big Band, DB Horns, and the Lana Hoffman Quartet. Attendance remained strong, bolstered by South Haven's downtown social district, which allowed attendees to enjoy local food and drinks during performances.

The proclamation also stated that Brown's "thoughtful curation of talented musicians highlights a broad spectrum of jazz styles and instruments, showcasing the creativity and skill of artists from across Southwest Michigan and beyond," and "through his leadership with Foundry Hall, Larry has embodied the organization's mission of building community through music, enriching South Haven's cultural landscape and fostering connections that extend far beyond the stage."

After the conclusion of the Jazz Festival in mid-September this year, Brown indicated that he would be stepping away from the festival after organizing it since 2017.

In accepting the Proclamation, Larry Brown thanked the City of South Haven. "Without the support of the City, the Jazz Festival wouldn't have made it past year two," he said. "There were permits and things and I was always helped through this."

He especially thanked South Haven's Special Events Coordinator, Michelle Coffey, who he said, "Was always there and always ready to help in any way."

Brown said that his retirement from the Jazz Festival did not mean the end of the annual event. "It is our intent that Foundry Hall will continue the Jazz Festival," he said.

Four friends create lighted trees for South Haven

By James Windell

When four Indiana Avenue neighbors who are buddies get together, you never know what they will come up with.

But Jeremy Buckingham, who goes by the nickname of Sparky – because, he thinks, he has a sparkling personality, came up with a, well, a sparkling idea. Why not light up trees on Indiana Avenue at Christmas time?

"I tried making a Christmas forest in my front yard at my prior house," Buckingham says. "It was horrible. Tiny trees purchased from the store and a large yard made it look like nothing. And the wind blew them over all the time." So, last year he wanted to do something different.

"Rev and I had been talking about community building and connecting neighbors." Buckingham says about his idea and about sharing it with Larry Brown, who goes by the nickname Rev. "I suggested we make better trees and ask people to buy them at cost to create a community forest. He liked the idea. And our neighbors did, too!"

Sparky and Rev's other two friends, Kirk "Rabbit" Wiley and Chip "Chainsaw" Hudson, joined them in the project. Together in December, 2024, they put up 15 decorated trees on Indiana Ave. "People loved them and more and more neighbors kept asking for them," says Buckingham.

The concept has grown and the project has become much bigger than they ever anticipated. "So far this year we've been asked to construct and decorate 45 trees, and we will be doing about 10 more this coming weekend," he says. Buckingham adds that they now charge $95 each but that price barely covers the cost of materials.

Sparky says that the trees they designed themselves are unique. "When we started out, Rev and I went through several iterations," he says. "Ultimately, we settled on the idea that stakes are more flexible in several ways, such as when people don't have flat yards."

He explains that they use

Electrical Metallic Tubing conduits with a stiff wire at the top to hold the LED strings. They weave about 150 feet of LED lights to create the "strings." At the ends of the strings are landscape stakes and hair ties as shock absorbers. "All of this works quite well," Buckingham says, "though the lines are not tight. You want the strings to be loose so the LED strings don't disconnect over time due to constant tension. We don't use several smaller strings connected end to end because the electric plugs and bundled excess wire didn't have a good look. The single string provides for a clean lighted appearance."

What makes their trees so special is the size. They are tall and wide. And, also, bright white. "Our trees are crisp and have a clean look," he says. "The uniformity throughout the town is a nice touch we didn't anticipate."

There's one other thing that the gang of four – dubbed the Treehouse Gang -- figured out. "Believe it or not, you can't buy a tree like this," Buckingham notes. "And you couldn't get one for less than $200 even if you could find one. Believe me, I've searched long and hard in hopes of getting out of the product business! Just getting the bright white lights in the right length was hard. We never expected that, but it's true."

Buckingham indicates that people like their trees so much that they are all around the city, not just on Indiana Ave., and many people who ordered trees have generously given them extra money – above what they were asked for.

At a house party at Wiley's house on Indiana Ave., on Dec. 2, 2025, not only did the Treehouse Gang talk about their lighted trees project, but they said they had donated their excess money to Kirk and Jennifer Wiley's Zambia project.

Although the Treehouse Gang can't take any more orders for this year, their unique lighted trees can be viewed on Indiana Ave, as well as on other streets around the city.

What's the future hold for the Treehouse Gang's decorated trees?

"We're hoping to get an organization to assist us next year," Buckingham says. "Maybe we'll come up with a new design made for less and in larger quantities and then donate the proceeds to a charity – like the South Haven Public School's Secret Santa program.

But for now, they can enjoy having brought something unique to the town they love.

"A neighbor down the street stopped me to say she turned down the street, and to her it was just magical," Buckingham says. "That was cool to hear. We never intended it to grow as it did, but it sure has been fun seeing a forest grow and meet so many like-minded individuals. We were just neighbors being neighbors. That's been fun."

Buckingham adds that there was a bonus in watching the Treehouse Gang work together toward something bigger. "I'm lucky to have great and giving neighbors."

Coastal cities have plenty of art galleries for Christmas gifts

By James Windell

Unlike many other cities, South Haven does not have an art gallery in its downtown.

But that doesn't mean you can't find quality art – paintings, signed prints, pottery and hand-made glass objects – in South Haven and its environs.

Of course, the South Haven Center for the Arts regularly displays art that you can purchase and this December their Mistletoe Market features plenty of creative and artistic gifts. In addition, Murphy's Antique Mall, 321 Center Street, has plenty of art throughout the many booths in the store – usually at very attractive prices.

Then there's Eagle Street Market just a couple of hundred feet from Murphy's at 422 Eagle Street. There is plenty of art throughout their shop, especially in the Gallery Eclectic, just off the lobby. The Gallery Eclectic is a small room with high quality art by local as well as nationally known artists.

But that's the extent of where you can shop for art in downtown South Haven. Fortunately, though, there are galleries and studios along Blue Star Highway and into Fennville, Douglas and Saugatuck where art can be found – even in the winter.

Still in South Haven is Mark William's Blue Star Pottery at 337 Blue Star Highway. Williams' bowls and platters feature classic leaf printed designs. Some of his pieces have elegant textured designs which are unique. To make sure that Williams is there and his studio open, call ahead at 269-487-8487.

Next door to Blue Star Pottery is the home and gallery of Suzi Lettner. She is a longtime painter and print maker who blends observation and memory to create landscapes, still lifes, and informal portraits. Her work often reflects the moods and colors of Michigan's west coast. She, too, should be contacted before you arrive. Her number is 269-637-1810.

You can continue up Blue Star Highway to make your way into Fennville where the Root Café, located at 120 E. Main Street, Fennville, combines space with Fernwood 1891. The walls in both spaces are covered with art by some of the most talented artists in the area. In addition, there is a diverse selection of pottery, including the work of Dawn Soltysiak.

If you get back on Blue Star Highway, you can continue into Douglas, which has become the city in West Michigan that has, perhaps, the most art galleries. Among the several galleries is the Button Gallery, LebenArt Gallery, Mr. Miller's Art Emporium, Now & Then, and the Ruth Crowe Artist Studio. But new and notable is Ox-Bow House.

Located at 137 Center Street, Douglas in the former Douglas Library building is Ox-Bow House. Ox-Bow House is a community art space created by the Ox-Bow School of Art, where the work of many artists, most associated with the famed Ox-Bow School of Art are available for sale. The oil paintings, watercolors, and prints are attractively displayed and most are priced very moderately.

If you continue on to Saugatuck, on Butler Street you will find the James Brandess Gallery at 238 Butler Street. Brandess is a celebrated painter who is known for his expressive landscapes, florals, and portraits that capture the essence of the area around Saugatuck. If you are lucky, Brandess may be in his gallery painting when you visit. But if he's not the staff will let you browse through his paintings and signed prints. There is always choice art that ranges from attractively priced signed prints to more expensive oil paintings.

The Saugatuck art scene is expanded by the Amazwi Contemporary Art Gallery, which specializes in contemporary African art, and the Jeff Blandford Gallery, which is known for innovative ceramics.

So, whether you are on the hunt for an expensive painting or a moderately priced signed print or a finely crafted piece of pottery, you should be able to locate something that you can wrap up the that special someone on your holiday gift list.

Ox-Bow House

Eagle Street Market

Eagle Street Market

Murphy's Antique Mall

James Brandess Art

James Brandess Art

Ox-Bow House

SHAES receives new Jaws of Life

South Haven Area Emergency Services (SHAES) has put into service new electric-powered extrication tools purchased from donations to the department. The new Jaws of Life equipment replace 27-year-old hydraulic tools.

Lead donors toward the $30,000 project included the Greater South Haven Area Community Foundation, the WR Grace Foundation. the Rotary Club of South Haven, Gridlife and Tris 4 Health for their donation after the recent triathlon .

Pictured are SHAES responders during a training session utilizing the tools.

The tools are used primarily at vehicle accidents when occupants are trapped inside.

"This investment is enhancing our operational capabilities, ensuring that our personnel have dependable, modern equipment during critical rescue operations," said SHAES Executive Director Brandon Hinz.

Fundraising efforts are currently underway to secure an additional set of tools so that each of the three SHAES stations is equipped with the tools, according to Firefighter/Paramedic Paul Pant who is heading the initiative.

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2ND FRONT PAGE

Get in the spirit with holiday concerts

By James Windell

There's something about holiday concerts at this time of the year that brings out the joy in people. Maybe it has to do with nostalgia. Or because it reminds us that we all live in a small community. Then again, perhaps it's just the uplifting power of live music.

Anyway, holiday concerts and musical events do create a shared sense of joy and tradition – which is welcome every year during this festive season.

If you're looking for the emotional touchstone of a live musical event, here's a brief guide to what is available this season.

The Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra is gearing up to spread some holiday cheer with its Merry & Bright pops concert on Saturday, December 13 at the Jenkins Theatre in the Lake Michigan College Mendel Center, .

Southwest Michigan Symphony Orchestra Music Director Matt Aubin says the concert will blend joyful music with community spirit, even giving one audience member the chance to hop onstage for a quick "Conducting 101" lesson and lead the orchestra in the classic holiday song "Sleigh Ride." The program will also feature classics like "The Polar Express," "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," and "Here We Come A-Caroling," along with the "Hanukkah Festival Overture" and Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus." Tickets are available on the SMSO website at https://smso.org/event/merry-brightmendel-center/

On December 12 and 13 Christmas in the Village in downtown Paw Paw will feature a Lighted Holiday Parade at 6:00 pm on the 12th with festive marching bands and carolers as well as live holiday music at the Courthouse at 6:45 pm.

The next day, December 13, Kringle Town & Merry Village Mingle goes from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm with local performers, carolers, and seasonal music throughout downtown Paw Paw.

Also on December 13 is the Home for the Holidays Concert at the West Ottawa Performing Arts Center, 3685 Butternut Drive, Holland. Performances at 3:30 and 7:30 pm will see local favorites Steve and Allson Martin joining the Holland Symphony Orchestra for Christmas and holiday classics.

Another December 13 event is Holiday Wine Dinner with Live Music at 6:00 pm at the Veritas Estate Winery. The evening pairs dinner with seasonal live music, creating a cozy holiday atmosphere. The Vintage Inn at Veritas Estate Winery is located at 7073 Baseline Road, South Haven. Visit ps://allevents.in/south-haven/holiday-wine-dinner-celebrate-and-save-for-the-holidays/100001568176671639 for more information.

On December 17, the KalHaven Strings Holiday Concert will take place at the Michigan Maritime Museum, 260 Dyckman Ave. at 6:30 pm. The violin/cello duo of Megan Healy and Lydia Raymond will perform festive classics in a family-friendly setting. The concert is free, but go to https://michiganmaritimemuseum.org/event/kalhaven-strings-holiday-concert/ for more information.

An annual tradition is the South Haven Performance Series which features the Vox GR Choral Ensemble on December 21 at 4 pm. The Vox GR Choral Ensemble will entertain with a holiday and classical repertoire at Peace Lutheran Church in South Haven. The concert is free and you can visit https://southhavenperformanceseries.org for further information.

Also on December 21 is A Motown Christmas at Lake Michigan College Mendel Center Jenkins Theatre. At 6:00 pm, the Motortown All-Stars, backed by a powerhouse band and horn section, present a dazzling lineup of vocalists and musicians who've performed with legendary Motown acts. Together, they bring Motown's timeless hits and Christmas favorites to life in a concert packed with stunning harmonies, smooth choreography, and all the style that made Detroit the soul capital of the world.

For ticket information, go https://www.boxofficeticketsales.com/7478320/a-motown-christmas-tickets-sun-12-21-2025-mendel-center

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Two bands on tap to benefit the India Love Sunflower Foundation

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
News4garrod@gmail.com

PAW PAW - Vineyard Chicks and the Black River Band will present a Holiday Concert, Friday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m. at The Lucky Wolf Theater, 404 E. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. A portion of the proceeds will benefit the India Love Sunflower Foundation.

Tickets are available now at The Lucky Wolf for $10 and will increase to $15 on show day. Tickets may also be purchased online for $11.45 and will increase to $16.65 on show day.

Owner Jason Deibler-Love said of the foundation, (it is) "Dedicated to creating vibrant cultural spaces that spark dialogue, celebrate artistry, and strengthen community."

Deibler-Love continued, saying, "Rooted in India's legacy of love and inclusion, the foundation's work spans film, events, and educational initiatives that amplify diverse voices and cultivate connection. With leadership from therapists, midwives, filmmakers, spiritual change makers, and community builders, we carry her forward her light - building a foundation where creativity inspires change, and community creates possibility."

The Lucky Wolf website said on the India Love Sunflower Foundation page, "We lost India on November 19, 2023. The abuse she endured as a child came back to haunt her earlier that year when we experienced the trauma of almost losing our son, Henning, to bacterial meningitis." The foundation was established in honor of India Love. Tragically, India died by suicide on Nov. 19.

"For now, her hope was to create a safe place for people to build community surrounded by the arts and good coffee and wine. We will continue her dream with the India Love Sunflower Foundation, a non-profit 501c3 whose purpose is

"To help remove the stigma around mental health by raising awareness, and providing assistance, support, resources, and education to individuals, families, and communities in need."

The Black River Band formed in 2010 and currently consists of: Paul Valentine, bass and vocals; Eddie Morris, guitar and vocals; Tommy Rusin, saxophone, keyboard and vocals; and Lou Brule, drums and vocals.

Special guests include Rick Dubinski, drums and Brian Allers, pedal steel guitar.

The Black River Band plays classic rock, country music and "The Blues."

Vineyard Chicks is made up of Kayla, keyboard, lead vocals and backing vocals; Trie, drums, lead vocals and backing vocals, and Bunkie, guitar, lead vocals and backing vocals, three sisters, each gifted musicians who take turns singing lead vocals with their amazing sisterly harmonies creating a musical experience you won't soon forget.

Vineyard Chick's Trie will play drums for the Black River Band that evening.Both bands will take to the stage and play the encore together.

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Paw Paw chorus presented Christmas concert

The Paw Paw Community Chorus presented the 25th annual Christmas Concert on Sunday, Dec. 7, at the Paw Paw United Methodist Church, 420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw. The chorus was under the direction of Theresa Vaughn and accompanied on piano by Evonne Heystek. Courier-Leader photo/Paul Garrod

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120 Baseline, opponents meet head on, planners table decision

By James Windell

The two sides in the 120 Baseline manufactured housing community project met head on in a public hearing before the South Haven Planning Commission on Thursday, December 4, 2025.

Representing Countryside Estates and the interests of Eric Rothner, the owner of the property at 120 Baseline Road, at the public hearing that was reconvened from last month's Planning Commission meeting was David Wiatroski, Project Manager for the proposed community, and attorney Emily Palacious, a rezoning and real estate attorney.

David Wiatroski in a lengthy statement to the Planning Commission made the case for the planned manufactured home development. "We're here to get it rezoned to a mobile home park," he said as he began his comments.

"There are several reasons we wanted to have a mobile home concept," he said. "But it doesn't have the same connotation of a mobile home park with transient people who are going in and out a lot."

Wiatroski explained that they are planning on units that are sizeable and "they're going to be single family homes." He added that, "Mr. Rothner is trying to establish a community of people who will enjoy South Haven just like he did."

Eris Rothner has owned a home on North Shore Drive in South Haven for more than 15 years. He has built several other homes in South Haven and he is a businessman who has been involved in healthcare management and real estate ventures in various states.

When Wiatroski turned it over to attorney Emily Palacios, she stated in her comments that she believes the criteria have been met to allow rezoning of the property.

Before the public hearing on the rezoning application was opened, Planning Commission Chair Bob Sherman said that there were more than 50 written messages that had been received prior to this meeting and that all but a couple expressed opposition to the proposed project.

When the public hearing opened, a dozen people made comments voicing their opposition to the rezoning of 120 Baseline. The speakers reiterated their previous reasons for being opposed to rezoning and these reasons have been stated several times in comments before the Planning Commission and the City Council. The recurring themes in the statements of those opposed to rezoning are that by rezoning the parcel of land and allowing a manufactured home community the Planning Commission will lose control of what is done with the property, that the proposed community will be incompatible with the surrounding neighborhoods, that the homes could become short term rental units, and that the owners of the 24 units that are proposed will pay reduced taxes to the City than if other types of single-family homes are bult there.

One member of the public who came forward to offer comments during the public hearing was Barry Fidelman, who presented a fresh perspective. "This park is going to be primarily marketed to Orthodox Jewish families who have a lot of kids," Fidelman said. "They walk to the synagogue on Saturday. That's why it is perfect for what we need for the synagogue to sustain itself."

After the public hearing was closed, the Planning Commission members began a dialogue about whether the property could be rezoned. However, the discussion bogged down over the question of whether the 24 units in the proposed development would be permanent homes and whether they could be used as rentals. Despite assurances from the City Attorney that 120 Baseline was not in the overlay district and, thus, not eligible for short term rentals, the matter continued to be debated. Palacios suggested that they provide assurances that they will never become rentals. This led to conversation about how such assurances could be made.

After a recess, when Palacios and Wiatroski had a chance to confer about providing this condition, Palacios stated that they would need time to discuss this further and decide how best to provide this assurance.

A motion was made to table any further consideration of the rezoning until the Countryside Estates team could come back with a written condition. It was conceded by Palacios as well as Zoning Administrator Kelly Getman-Dissette that it might be January, 2026 or later before the matter would come back to the Planning Commisson. The motion was passed and deliberations about rezoning 120 Baseline will be continued sometime after January, 2026.

SH City Council approves Phase I Design for Overton Project

By James Windell

Matt Szumiski, Land Acquisition and Development Analyst with Dwelling Place of Grand Rapids, appeared before the South Haven City Council on Monday, December 1, 2025 and shared slides of the exterior of the 53-unit apartment building that constitutes Phase I in the development of the Overton property.

City Council members who had not attended a recent public engagement session held by Dwelling Place had not previously seen the drawings of the proposed apartment building.

City Manager Kate Hosier said that the design for the apartment building was being brought before the City Council "just to make sure that Dwelling Place is on the right track before sending them through the planning and zoning process.

Szumiski said that he was excited to show the City Council what they've come up with. He then showed several slides of the architectural drawings.

The final site plans and building designs for the south side (multifamily portion) of the Overton Development project were shared with the public and some city officials in the public engagement session in November. Design drawings showed that the multifamily building will be three stories (tapering to two stories on one end with a rooftop deck) and include 53 units, 80 parking spaces, a mix of one- and two-bedroom units, and amenities like community rooms and outdoor programming. The building's facade will likely feature a mix of brick, paneling, and wood, though exact materials and colors are not finalized and depend on funding and cost. The flat roof design was chosen for height concerns and local architectural consistency.

After his presentation, City Council members asked questions indicating greater concern with funding for the project than with the design of the multifamily building.

"We will be putting the applications together in the next couple of months as we go forward," Szumiski said. "We are going for low-income tax credits through the Michigan State Housing Authority. It's an extremely competitive process and we need to make sure our application is perfect because if we don't score well, we might have to come back again for another round."

After discussion, the City Council unanimously approved Phase I of the project.

Before Dwelling Place hunkers down to work on the application, they will be presenting the final site plans and building designs to the South Haven Planning Commission in January, 2026.

VB County Road Commission details county snow plowing

LAWRENCE - Winter in Michigan can be unpredictable, and snowstorms often last 24 hours or more. Clearing roads after a storm takes time, and even small events can create hazardous conditions due to wind and drifting snow. The Van Buren County Road recently explained what area residents can expect when winter weather hits and how the county road commission works to keep roads safe.

The Van Buren County Road Commission treats each winter snow event as an individual occurrence because every event is different and varies in snow depth, type (snow, slush, ice), and temperature changes. Routine winter maintenance occurs within eight-hour days, Monday through Friday.

Routine snow removal operations begin on the affected areas of the County Primary Road network as a first priority. These roads include Red Arrow Highway, Blue Star Highway, and all roads with the "County Road (CR)" designation. These primary roads create a network of roads connecting to state highways, cities, and villages and primarily have the most traffic. By focusing here, the road commission can provide the greatest impact to the traveling public. Then, as a secondary priority, road commission crews work on the affected areas of the Local Road system (streets and avenues and within subdivisions).

Non-routine winter maintenance occurs on weekends or overtime (hours beyond the normal eight-hour workday). These operations are performed as follows using minimum crew sizes to cover the affected areas:

A. In the event of a snowfall more than four (4") inches, the most critical locations on selected County Primary Roads will be covered, as conditions permit.

B. Unusual ice and/or wind conditions causing hazardous driving, or impassable conditions in the affected areas of the road system, as conditions permit.

C. In the event of a snowfall more than eight inches, authorization shall be extended to cover the Local Road system of the affected area(s), as conditions permit.

The Van Buren County Road Commission's goal is to keep roads in a safe and reasonable condition for public travel within the limits of available resources.

Area residents who have questions on winter maintenance can contact the Van Buren County Road Commission at (269) 674-8011, or e-mail at: vbcrc@vbcrc.org.

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VBISD, state educators join forces to share warmth and support to multilingual learners

VBISD and State Educators Join Forces

VBISD and State Educators Spread Warmth

LAWRENCE - On Nov. 12, the MASA Team, alongside partners Kingscott, SET SEG, and Trane, delivered approximately 300 Winter Warmth Totes to multilingual learners served by the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD). About 25 totes were delivered directly to Lawrence Elementary, with the rest distributed to elementary students across districts served by the ISD. The delivery arrived just after Michigan's first sticking snowfall, making the timing perfect for a project centered on comfort and care.

This fall, VBISD Superintendent Dave Manson was randomly selected from a pool of more than 50 Impact Award submissions, earning the opportunity to lead a project that would make a meaningful difference for students. After working with district leaders, he identified multilingual learners as the group that would benefit most from targeted winter support. VBISD Board of Education members joined the MASA team for delivery day, helping distribute totes personally to students.

Each Winter Warmth Tote was thoughtfully stocked with essential cold-weather items, including hats, gloves, scarves, warm socks, lotion, and Chapstick—ensuring students had what they needed to stay warm during Michigan's harsh winter months. At schools such as Bloomingdale Elementary and Pullman Elementary, students eagerly explored their bags, trying on their new gear and sharing excitement with classmates and staff. The joy and gratitude throughout the buildings made the day truly special.

"This initiative helps many of us reconnect with our 'why,'" said Tina Kerr, executive director of MASA. "It shows what can happen when we unite behind something good for students."

What began last fall as a simple idea within MASA has grown into an inspiring movement, one that symbolizes purpose, partnership, and the impact educators can have when they unite for good. VBISD is proud to be this year's MASA Impact recipient and grateful for the warmth - both literal and inspirational - this partnership has brought to families across the community.

The next Impact Award recipient will be announced at MASA's Midwinter Conference in January, with one final project planned for spring to close out the school year.

Local Christmas Basket Food Drive Brings out the Best of PPPS

PAW PAW - If you are looking for the character traits in children that most strongly predict their ability to build and sustain a generous community later in life, look no further than Paw Paw Public Schools (PPPS). Now in its third year in the district, CharacterStrong, a PreK-12 program focused on building character traits that promote students' well-being, relationships and leadership skills has been embraced by PPPS. By helping students consistently practice empathy, responsibility, and compassion, the program is elevating the culture of the entire school community.

The momentum generated by this program, and the enthusiasm of PPPS students, has extended beyond the campus, creating a positive ripple-effect throughout the Paw Paw community.

Beginning in November, students from all grade levels went to work, eagerly collecting and donating non-perishable food for the 2025 Paw Paw Lions Club Christmas Basket Program. From pancake mix, pasta and canned peaches to soups, cereals, cake mixes and more, students, their families, and PPPS staff took this assignment seriously.

From Paw Paw High School (PPHS), the National Honor Society, with assistance from their advisors, generously gave their time by collecting canned goods and other non-perishable items at the entrances of Family Fare in Paw Paw and Wagoner's in Mattawan. With the help of students from the "Pay it Forward" class at PPHS, they also collected donations at Save a Lot in Paw Paw. In total, Paw Paw High School collected and donated 3,525 items to the Lions Christmas Basket Program, which will in turn be given to local families in need.

At Paw Paw Middle School, the Student Council led the efforts to collect items for the Lions Christmas Basket Program. Healthy competition among the sixth, seventh and eighth grades generated 1,148 items for local families in need. Congratulations to the winner – the Eighth Grade Class for bringing in 474 items. According to Kayla Laurian, Student Council Advisor, the total donations doubled last year's total.

At Paw Paw Early and Later Elementary, classes and grades were also in a friendly competition to see who could collect the most. In total, Paw Paw Early Elementary collected 1,074 items, and because Paw Paw Later Elementary assigned each food item a certain number of points, the number of items was not readily available, but suffice it to say hundreds of individual items and dozens of cases of canned goods and boxed goods were collected and donated.

Paw Paw Public Schools Superintendent Jeremy Davison concluded with, "To everyone who collected, donated, or helped with the food drive in any way, thank you! Your generosity and care for one another make a real impact. Thank you for continuing to embody our PACK spirit and for partnering with the Lions Club to support families right here in Paw Paw."

Paw Paw High School Students

Paw Paw Later Elementarty Students with Teacher Amy Koehn

Paw Paw Middle School Students with Teacher, Kaylah Laurian

Paw Paw Early Elementary students with Teachers Jennifer Ayres and Stephanie Basurto

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VIEWPOINT

Road Rage Is Killing Us — Literally

MIKE'S MUSINGS

MIKE WILCOX
PUBLISHER

I've written about road rage before, but nothing prepared me for the horrifying incident that unfolded in our Morning Star/Recorder area over the holiday weekend. It was, without question, one of the most senseless and tragic episodes I've ever encountered — the kind of incident that forces every one of us to take a hard look at our own behavior behind the wheel.

A 22-year-old Concord man is dead. Not because of icy roads, or a mechanical failure, or a momentary lapse in attention — but because two drivers allowed anger to override judgment.

Michigan State Police detailed what happened:

On Nov. 28, around 6:07 p.m., troopers responded to a chaotic scene along M-60 and N. Main Street. Two vehicles — a Chevy Malibu driven by the young Concord man and a Jeep Cherokee driven by a 24-year-old Parma man — had engaged in a road-rage confrontation. Both drivers pulled onto the shoulder. Both got out. And then, disastrously, both began physically fighting in the roadway.

While they were brawling in the traffic lane, a westbound Ram 1500 came upon them. The 62-year-old Hanover man behind the wheel had no chance to avoid impact. Both men were struck. One died. The other survived with non-life-threatening injuries. Police say neither alcohol nor drugs played a role.

Witnesses disagree on what sparked the altercation — who cut off whom, who brake-checked, who shouted first. But here's the truth that matters: none of that changes the outcome. A young life is gone. A family is shattered. And for what? A moment's anger? Bruised pride? A refusal to let something go?

Accounts suggest that the Jeep, carrying a family returning from hunting, pulled onto M-60. The Chevy pulled out behind them. Tempers flared. Someone didn't like someone else's driving. Words — or gestures — were exchanged. Both drivers made the fatal decision to pull over near the old Jenks Oil Station and escalate the confrontation.

A fight broke out on the high ground near the Concord Mill Pond, eventually spilling onto the roadway. Seconds later, the Ram appeared — and tragedy followed.

A woman who arrived shortly afterward described consoling the distraught passenger of the Chevy. "I felt sorry for her," she said. "Hugged her. Told her it's okay." She watched as CPR was performed on the young man for 15 agonizing minutes. She will undoubtedly carry that image with her for the rest of her life. So will many others.

If anyone still believes road rage is some exaggerated talking point, this incident stands as undeniable proof of its deadly reality.

We must teach our teenagers — in driver's training and at home — that retaliating on the road is never acceptable. You don't settle disagreements with a stranger's driving. You don't pull over to "set someone straight." You don't follow, confront, threaten, or escalate. Ever.

All of us make mistakes behind the wheel. New drivers misjudge gaps or turns. Seniors may drive more slowly out of caution. Others may be anxious from past accidents. None of these deserve a horn-blaring tirade, a shouted insult, or a roadside fistfight.

We must do better. As motorists. As citizens. As human beings.

The next time irritation rises — when someone merges too slowly, brakes too quickly, or forgets a turn signal — choose restraint over rage. Let it go. Take a breath. Remember this young man, and remember that no moment of anger is worth a life.

One family will never see their son again because two people forgot that simple truth.

Let this be the last time we read a story like this.

Sheriff's Report- VB County Animal Control Division partners with Pets for Patriots

"Our Animal Control Division has partnered with Pets for Patriots. It's a program we are now utilizing to show our gratitude to our veterans and Gold Star Families in our county. This program now allows our local veterans from World War II to active duty or being a Gold Star Family to be eligible for the benefit. Reach out to our shelter if you are interested or know anyone who would be interested to participate in it," said Van Buren County Sheriff Daniel Abbott. "Our SWAT Team trained in Kalamazoo at an abandoned motel that is getting ready to be torn down. They ran numerous training exercises such as room clearing, breaching doors, approaches, stacks, etc.," said Sheriff Abbott.Van Buren County Sheriff's Office Uniform Response handled a stolen license plate in Paw Paw Township. It was entered into LEIN as stolen.

Uniform Response handled a stolen cell camera in Arlington Township. A deer hunter's cell cam was stolen from their hunting area.

Uniform Response handled a PPO (Personal Protection Order) violation in the City of Gobles. A report is being sent to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office for review based on the information given.

Uniform Response handled a call in which an individual was setting in traffic in Antwerp Township. The individual was found to have two bench warrants out of Kalamazoo. The individual was arrested on the warrants.

Uniform Response handled a single vehicle crash in a ditch in Antwerp Township. The investigation found that the driver was operating under the influence of alcohol. The driver was lodged for the incident.

Uniform Response was busy with numerous crashes and slide-offs.

Uniform Response received a tip about the location of a wanted fugitive in Hamilton Township. Deputies observed the wanted individual upon arrival at the residence. Deputies were able to make entry without force as occupants of the residence were cooperative. The suspect was arrested and lodged.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Left should stop whining, support America First

Dear Editor,

Despite one hard-earned victory after another the progressive left and mainstream media continue to misinform the American public on our nations state of affairs. I believe to date President Trump has brokered eight peace treaties around the world. The most current domestic and foreign financial commitments in the U.S total in the neighborhood of $9.6 trillion dollars. While CBS tells us how soft the U.S. economy is, according to Forbes, a record breaking $14.6 Billion in combined Black Friday and Cyber Monday sales was realized. This represents a 27% increase from 2024. And as of today, U.S. West Texas oil is $59.45 per barrel and you can get regular gas in South Haven today for $2.62 per gallon.

But the America Last liberals continue to decry every American victory while supporting those throughout the world endeavoring to destroy our Republic. The new Democrat party isn't even attempting to provide intelligent solutions; their sole plan is to obstruct any effort on the part of President Trump in hopes of resurrecting our nation. It is far too obvious and frightening that liberals will support any and all enemies of our nation to thwart Republican efforts. They align with Antifa, Hamas, Muslim Brotherhood, by and large all Muslim extremists, communists and the one world order oligarchs like George Soros. Historically the two primary destructive forces of civilization and human life throughout the world have been Islam and communism and the new Democrat party has embraced both. Pseudo-intellectuals will say that they are Democratic Socialists, as if that is supposed to be a significant difference. Any variation of socialism is still socialism and in the words of Vladimir Lenin who was responsible for between 9-50 million deaths "The goal of socialism is communism." For democrats that still believe there is any integrity left in their party, John Bachtell, past chairman of the Communist Party USA stated "American communists are eager to work with the Democratic party to advance the modern communist agenda and achieve communist goals."

Not satisfied with open borders, rampant crime and supporting the election of communists and radical Muslims in our nation, six elected democrats have publicly suggested that military service members defy orders they may deem to be unlawful.

The left is now whining about our military destroying cartel vessels and their occupants in international waters, transporting drugs into our nation. They have no concern for 23-year-old Iryna Zarutska who was butchered on a train by a serial criminal while several passengers simply looked on. Then there's Bethany MaGee who was doused in gasoline and set on fire by another habitual offender on a Chicago train. Liberal activist judges continue to release violent predators who continue to commit murders, rapes, abductions and assaults on American children, women and men. Violence in America has become an acceptable tool of the new Democrat party as we witnessed most recently with the cowardly shooting of two National Guard member in D.C. The left justifies these assaults on American citizens who oppose their agenda, while mainstream media does their best to bury the stories.

Now the left is floating the conspiracy theory that Trump wants to invade Venezuela for their oil. What a joke, we have more oil in the U.S. than we can use or sell in several lifetimes. The fact is, Russia had been looking for a partner in the western hemisphere and in 2006 found that partner in Venezuela, to manufacture small arms and ammunition and operate as their satellite. Last week Russia began evacuation of their citizens from Venezuela. Perhaps President Trump can put an end to this unholy alliance before turning Venezuela into a 340,000 square mile parking lot. Remember, 23 years ago young people in Venezuela were cheering for Chavez and socialism and today their children are eating out of trash cans.

What the media refuses to admit is that President Trump is doing exactly what the majority of Americans expect of him and this is why we voted for him for president. Most of us, and more, would do it again.

America has been fighting radical Islam since the late 18th century and we have been fighting communists and their proxies around the world since the middle of the 20th century. Combined they now comprise primary elements of the new Democrat base. Quite simply Islam and communism are not compatible with our Judeo-Christian Constitutional Republic.

Recently I read some tripe about how Republicans need to grow a spine and reject Trump's efforts. Although this un-American attitude is deplorable, I do agree that Republicans as well as patriotic Democrats should all collectively grow a spine and support our nation's America First agenda. Refuse to be intimidated by the bullying of the left. When liberals are unable to justify their position, they will call you names; racist, transphobic or islamophobia, so what. When a liberal calls you names it's no different than a 6-year-old calling someone a poopy-head simply because they lack the intellectual capacity for mature discourse.

John R. Young

Reader suggests 3 changes to health policies

Dear Mike the Editor,

After reading your critique of the Congressional Schedule last week, I called a friend to see what I was missing. One thing that is not immediately apparent from the roughly one-quarter empty schedule (available on Roll Call) is that the empty space belongs to committees. Committees meet only when the chamber is not in session.

Committees are meant to be the workhorses of Congress, yet all most of us see is political grandstanding during presidential appointment hearings.

Committees are actually responsible for full oversight of government agencies; drilling down to bill language and intent; exposing special favors in department budgets; debating policy disagreements; and more.

The fact that committees aren't doing this contributes to our current healthcare mess: inflation, fraud, ongoing patient debt, and $ 38.5 Trillion in national debt. (You won't believe the dearth of video on CSPAN's Committee page.)

This is why the current healthcare debate is taking place in hallways, sound bites, and press conferences. Without strong leadership in Congress, that role is left to the president. So that's who I wrote on Monday.

Dear President Trump,

Thank you so much for working on HSA Accounts and eliminating wasteful subsidies that benefit insurance companies.

Could you make three changes to HSA Accounts?

Please DECOUPLE these accounts from the wrap-around insurance mandate. It's a huge tax required to donate to them, just another gift to insurance companies enabling them to control our care.

Next, please RAISE THE CAP of annual donations to $15,000 or even more.

Finally, please EXPAND QUALIFIED HSA SPENDING to include Health Sharing memberships and insurance premiums. That gives people real choice, instead of slavery to insurance plans, protocols, and "managed care" which is a joke.

An additional bonus would be allowing people to donate from their own HSA to others in need, and to bequeath it to their children.

I'm a lifelong nurse who entered health policy when Obamacare was passed. In all my study and work with patients and families, I believe these three changes would make the greatest difference for the people who truly need better options to pay for healthcare.

This path would lift MANY working poor and self-employed out of Medicaid dependence and Marketplace subsidies. It would let them manage their own pre-tax dollars for their healthcare, and I'm convinced it would dramatically reduce fraud. People guard their own money. Besides, we have banks and the IRS guarding these accounts against misuse.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of this plan for the country would be restoring people's economic voice in healthcare. Special interests have controlled huge pots of money from employers and government, and used it to lead patients and clinicians around by the nose for FAR too long.

Thank you for all you do, Mr. President. God bless you for your heart to secure our lives, liberties, and property including conscience.

Sincerely,

Abigail Nobel, BSN, RN, MA

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Lawrence celebrates a Hometown Christmas

The Lawrence Hometown Christmas Celebration was held Saturday, Dec. 6. Events included a craft show, a visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Lawrence Library, and concluded with a Light Up Parade, which ended at the Lawrence Village Park. There, Santa Claus helped light the Village Tree. The Lawrence High School Band provided holiday musical selections.

Courier-Leader photos/ Paul Garrod

Lawrence business displays mural on building

By Paul Garrod
Staff Writer
news4garrod@gmail.com

LAWRENCE – An empty brick building in downtown Lawrence underwent a transformation that now houses Lawrence Community Care, a business which provides direct primary care and urgent care to area residents.

Following the purchase of a commercial building in downtown Lawrence in late spring of 2023, husband and wife, Kevin and Rachel Ferrell, noticed that the interior was in very bad shape, while the exterior was a huge "eyesore" with mustard yellow peeling paint over blocks that needed a lot of repairs.

The Ferrells thought that it would be "super cool to put something on that wall that would beautify it and give the community something that gave them a feeling of pride and togetherness," said Rachel. She added, "Jeff, from the library, really helped guide and move our hope forward by getting us set up and working with The Tech Center in Lawrence."

During the winter of 2024, the Ferrells met twice with Tech Center Instructor Heather Macyauski and her Graphic Design class. During the initial visit, the Ferrells, along with Jeff Heaton, of the Van Buren District Library, Lawrence Branch, met with her class to pitch the project and discuss any parameters. "We were welcomed back for each student to present their respective designs to us. We met at the library along with Lawrence Village Council President John Gritter, and VBDL Lawrence Branch Head Librarian Anne Cox, to narrow down their favorites," said Rachel. The favorites were picked based on design, ease of implementation, and the number of different paint colors needed.

"After narrowing the choice down to two, Kevin and I got the final say on which we preferred. We love nature and the deer reminded us of a little bit of "Annie" the local deer that would frequent Lawrence during her morning and evening walks through downtown," said Rachel.

During the summer of 2024, rehab work on the building was started. In September of 2024, the building's north wall was scraped and sanded, mortar was re-tucked, and two coats of a white exterior paint/primer were applied. "With lots going on, Jeff, with the help of Gritter, got the design penciled on the wall this fall (2025), followed by rounding up a group of artist friends and local area volunteers to execute the painting," said Rachel. A second coat will be required in the spring of 2026, "as we ran out of suitable weather," said Rachel.

She concluded, "The second coat should help with durability and longevity. We are so pleased with the outcome and hope that the project fosters a bit of Lawrence pride while bringing a little bit of artistry and color to our downtown area."

In addition, the Ferrells hope to finish next spring prepping the wall at the back of the building "in hopes of eventually wrapping the image around it in some small but interesting way," said Rachel.

The Lawrence Downtown Development Authority (DDA) came alongside Lawrence Community Care during the painting phase and approved funding for the project.

Additional DDA projects are being considered Lawrence DDA Chairperson, Dale Gribler, said, "The DDA looked at different ways we could make the downtown area more appealing while helping our businesses. We added a line item to our budget for murals on commercial buildings. We are extremely happy with the mural on the Lawrence Community Care property and have received interest from three other properties for next spring and summer season."

Lakeshore Paint and Patio store in South Haven provided guidance to the business in making paint decisions.

The Ferrells' roots hail from the South Haven area, they have been members of the Lawrence community for almost a decade.

Kevin Ferrell, PA-C, has a diverse patient care background with over 30 years of experience. From his modest roots as an emergency room (ER) technician and respiratory therapist, to serving his country as a military flight medic, he has always made it a priority to help others. Kevin's varied medical experience includes military assignments as a combat medic, helicopter flight medic, and Physician Assistant during multiple foreign exercises, overseas deployments, and duty stations (Japan, Bosnia- Herzegovina, Iraq, Poland and Denmark).

After graduating from Physician Assistant (PA) school in 2015, from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Kevin returned to the ER as an Emergency Medicine PA. In 2019, he began another period of full time active-duty military service as a medical officer with the Michigan National Guards' 51st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support team. During this period, he continued to work part-time as an Emergency Medicine PA with Corewell Health system.

He formed Lawrence Community Care in 2022 and began offering house calls and telemedicine on a limited basis to the local area. After 32 years of service to his country, Kevin officially retired from the Army in January of 2025. He decided that he would dedicate his next form of public service to the community in which he lives.

Rachel has a bachelor's degree in business administration. She chose to stay home and care for their three boys during Kevin's multiple military deployments. Now that the children are grown, she is using her skills to help breathe life into their joint venture.

For more information about Lawrence Community Care, 119 N. Paw Paw St., phone: (269) 241-2220 or visit the website at: www.lawrencecommunitycare.com.

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Paw Paw Launches New "Christmas in the Village" Celebration

Paw Paw will sparkle with holiday cheer this season as the community debuts its new Christmas in the Village celebration - two days of festivities, local spirit, and small-town magic.

The event kicks off Friday, Dec. 12, with the Lighted Holiday Parade at 6 p.m. through downtown, led by this year's Grand Marshals, Roman and Ava Plaszczak. Community members, organizations, and businesses are invited to take part - and there's still time to sign up for the parade here. The Tree Lighting Ceremony at the Courthouse follows at 6:45 p.m., where Paul DeYoung will be honored with the Community Ambassador Award. Photos with Santa will follow the tree lighting.

Festivities continue Saturday, Dec. 13, with the Rotary 5K Santa Run at 9 a.m., followed by Kringle Town on Paw Paw Street from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring old-world charm and handcrafted gifts in wooden market houses donated by Meyer Wood Products. The day also includes the Merry Village Mingle throughout downtown shops.

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

FRIDAY & SATURDAY

DEC. 12

DEC. 13

2025

ALL NEW EVENTS!

FRIDAY • DECEMBER 12

6:00 PM - ALL NEW LIGHTED HOLIDAY PARADE
Beginning at Freshwater Church, the parade will bring Santa to town via Michigan Ave. to Gremps St. and wind back up Paw Paw St. to the courthouse.

CHILDREN'S LIGHTED HOLIDAY PARADE

Costumed Characters
Floats • Music
Candy

COMMUNITY HOLIDAY TREE LIGHTING

Caroling
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6:45 PM - COMMUNITY TREE LIGHTING
On Paw Paw Street
Celebrate with Santa as he lights the holiday tree in front of the Van Buren County Courthouse.

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FOR MORE INFO:

SATURDAY • DECEMBER 13

9:00 AM - Paw Paw Rotary Santa Run
Suit up for a 5K course through downtown Paw Paw!

10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

KRINGLE TOWN

KRINGLE TOWN - On Paw Paw Street
Visit with Santa's elves offering you holiday treats, gifting and activities.

THE MERRY VILLAGE MINGLE

THE MERRY VILLAGE MINGLE - Downtown
Stroll through downtown businesses for Christmas cookies, signature drinks and other holiday specials.

SANTA AT THE CARNEGIE
At the Carnegie Community Center, 129 S. Kalamazoo St.
Visit with Santa for a free digital photo, a cup of hot cocoa, cookies, and crafts.

SANTA AT THE CARNEGIE

ICE CARVING By IceScapes
In the County Park, Downtown Paw Paw
Watch working ice sculptors create holiday statuary on the spot, or marvel at their finished sculptures.

SANTA'S WORKSHOP
At the Paw Paw Area Chamber of Commerce, 206 E. Michigan Ave.
KIDS! Stop in to make reindeer food, and a Christmas craft project, and have your face painted.

11:30 AM and 2:30 PM - CHRISTMAS STORY TIME
At Words on Pages Bookshop, 200 E. Michigan Ave.

1:00 PM - JOHN DUDLEY'S MERRY MAGIC SHOW
At the Strand Theater, 115 E. Michigan Ave.

3:00 PM - FREE MOVIE - "The Christmas Chronicles"
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SECTION B

South Haven soccer junior enjoys memorable season

Luke Swearingen and teammates were state runnerups

By John Raffel
Correspondent

SOUTH HAVEN — Luke Swearingen was huge contributor for the South Haven boys varsity soccer team which was state runners-up this season in Division 3.

"The team has performed extremely well in my opinion, even though the season is over," he said. "If someone would have asked me mid season I would have said the same. I remember talking with my dad about half way through the season and saying, 'Ireally think we could hang with any team in the state.

"After playing, and taking down some teams from Division 1 and 2 our success really started to show. I think during the season I performed well overall. Some games I had off days, missing big long balls or getting passed by too easily. However, I also had games where mistakes were very minimal and the other team had less than maybe 5 shots, most of which weren't even on frame."

Swearingen said he improved during the season substantially during the season. "Our very first game we played Three Rivers, and tied them 3-3," he said. "This was a typical first game, lots of mistakes, lots of miscommunication, and we didn't have our best formation. As the season progressed we changed things up, most notably having three in the back for defense.

"This caused me to improve majorally, as my

help defense was much less, I was the last resort. As the season progressed, my soccer IQ increased, helping to direct my team; my technical abilities increased, my long ball became more accurate, and I could kick it further, as well as my first touch getting better. My defense itself improved, where I positioned myself, stepping to the ball without getting passed by, shuffling sideways so I won't get megged. I feel that I improved most dramatically during the playoffs, districts, regionals, and state."

Swearingen played center back, "but my role was more than that," he said. "At practice I always try to set an example by doing each drill right, not by calling out others, but by being a visual leader. During games I always tried to keep a positive attitude and encourage others, although I wasn't always perfect, I made sure to encourage the team when necessary.

"Last year I played the same position as center back, but I was sort of an apprentice to a senior named Cuzberto Belmares. Cuzy, is what we called him, taught me most of what I know, last year I followed his example during practice and games. Although during practice my role of a visual leader was very similar I would like to say. Overall my role was similar last year but not exactly the same, last year I wasn't the same leader and encourager I became this season." Swearingen added, " I love fundamentals, so if I were to respond in short I would say my fundamental strengths are the fundamentals. I think my biggest fundamental strengths are my positioning while defending, my passing, clearing the ball whether it be a header or a loose ball on the ground, and my help defense when my right or left defender gets beat.

"This year I worked at my long ball because it wasn't very powerful and didn't cover much ground, but it improved majorly. Secondly, I focused a lot on my first touch, more specifically my first touch out of the air, I needed to work on this because settling a ball at defense can win or lose games. Lastly, I worked on my positioning during the game, I needed to push my team up when on offense, I needed to learn where to be to cut offpasses, I needed to learn where to position myself to be ready for long balls over us, and I needed to learn where to be during help defense." Swearingen said one of the best memories from this season that he made was the one day the team had a beach practice." "Most of our team made it, but we did a 3v3 tournament and then went into the lake as our ice bath," he said "After that practice I remember thinking, "I'm gonna miss those guys next year.' Obviously another phenomenal memory was our teams run in the playoffs. After each win our team would go crazy with excitement, it began to feel more and more unreal.

"Team highlights include the beach practice for me, but I think some highlights that included the whole team was senior night, really the best senior night anyone could've asked for. We played Rockford, a D1 school, everyone knew they'd be good, and we all knew that D1 is a whole different level of sports. Nonetheless, our team was fired up for senior night. We ended that game 2-1 I believe, what a magical night that was, it felt so special not only to win on senior night, but to beat a major opponent. I know every senior felt satisfied after that night."

Looking back, "Personally, I didn't really go into the season with any expectations, but I would say I exceeded them," Swearingen said. "I received the honor of second team all state, which really surprised me. The team expectations were set very early in the season, to win districts. Our main opponent in districts was Fennville, but then we found out that Paw Paw was in our district too, we beat paw paw in the district semis, and made it to the finals with Fennville. We ended up beating Fennville which felt unreal, never in my soccer career, high school or middle school have I ever beat Fennville, and we were district champs. "That was our expectation right there, but we

pushed so far beyond that, we all couldn't believe it."

Bangor girls eye winning record

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BANGOR — Bangor's girls basketball team had an impressive temp last season and coach Bret Witkowski hopes to see more of the same this year.

Last year "Bangor's record was 9-13, best season since 2012-2013," Witkowski said. "We finished in the middle of the conference and earned the third seed in districts. Game highlights was beating district number 1 seed Decatur during the season, and stopping 13- and 15-game losing streaks to Bloomingdale and Hartford.

On graduations, "we lost two seniors, Jaelynn Little who was all-conference second team and team MVP and leading scorer and K'Liyana O'Steen the team's leading rebounder," Witowski said. "We have six returning letterwinners, the most in my three years. Senior Madison Lennox will play the point and 2 guard. Senior Izzy Horvath, who came out as a sophomore, is moving from the post to a wing this season. She is all state and all-conference softball pitcher who has committed to Kalamazoo College next year.

For junior Lexi Wisniewski "who was second in the team as a sophomore and led the team in assists, this will be her third season starting on varsity," Witkowski said. "Last season she was second team all-conference and is also all-conference in softball and volleyball. Senior Brea Wines, who is playing her first season of basketball, had a really good summer and off season, and junior Amiyah Corona who played varsity and JV last season is our best man defender.

"Others are sophomore guard Isabella Macedo, who played varsity last year, and six-foot post player Cielo Maldonado, others helping this season are sophomore Solexy Calderon, juniors Yarnissa Campbell, Azariah Jackson and Alyia Lee."

Witkowski added: "We are still a young team overall, but my goal is to take care of game one, etc. If we take care of ourself the wins will take care of themselves. We are a balanced team, from perimeter to mid range to post, the team comes to work every day at practice. When I first arrived getting the effort was first hurdle we had to clear, now they bring the effort to practice and games."

He said the team needs to work on "not turning the ball over, and making good choices on who and when to make passes. I like little more depth from our reserves so as they develop we will grow as a team."

The top 3 teams are in the conference are "Centerville, Cassopolis and White Pigeon," Witowski said. "Our goal is to make the next jump in the conference as two years ago were at the bottom, last year in the middle."

On Monday, it was Bangor 38, Eau Claire 18

Lexi Wisniewski had 9 points. Madison Lenox had 7 points and Cielo Maldonado 6 points.

"Vikings open the season with a win," Witkowsk said. "All 14 players played quality minutes tonight with five players getting their first varsity experience. Especially proud of senior Breana Wines who played her first high school and scored and did a great job rebounding

Next game is Wednesday home vs. Coldwater,

Paw Paw boys beat Sturgis, Mattawan wins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

PAW PAW — It was Paw Paw 55, Sturgis 44 in boys basketball action.

Paw Paw had quarter leads of 12-6, 27-25, and 40-25.

For Paw Paw, Truman Brennan: 18 pts, 3 Reb, 7 Steals, 3 Assists

Kaelin Tate: 14 pts, 7 Reb, 3 Steals, 4 Assists

Coach Aaron Beery: "The Red Wolves started the season with the same defensive performance we are accustomed to. They limited the Trojans to just 29 points through the first 28 minutes of the game, before the starters exited the game.

Truman Brennan paced the Red Wolves in scoring and Kaelin Tate stuffed the stat sheet with his all around play. It was a total team effort as all players got into the game. The Red Wolves shot 64% from 2s and only 17% from 3, so there is room for growth in this season."

The Red Wolves will be back in action on Tuesday as they head up to Hudsonville to play Unity Christian.

Mattawan wins 53-50 over Lakeshore Friday

"A tough first half shooting and foul trouble sees us fall behind by double digits," coach Joshua Brown said. "Enter Junior Ryan Willis off the bench. Ryan hit a big 3 at the buzzer at the end of the third to cut the lead to 8 for Lakeshore and we roared with a 19-8 fourth quarter to come from behind to beat Lakeshore to stay undefeated.

"Ryan led us with 16 pts. Lucas Koning hit his only basket in the clutch with a minute left and Liam Walsh knocked down his only 3 to ice the game. Everett Wherley knocked down 2 free throws and we iced a well fought game."

Mattawan hockey wins tournament, is 11-0

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN — The Mattawan High School Wildcat Hockey team beat Utica Fraser United and Portage over the weekend en route to winning the Griffs HS Hockey Tournament at Griff's Icehouse in Grand Rapids..

On Friday night, Lucas Smilanich logged the Wildcats first goal and Brennan Wallenstein had 2 goals in a 7-5 win against Utica Fraser. (G) Maverick VanHeukelom got the win in net.

In the Championship against Portage, the Wildcats dominated the Muskies in a 6-2 win. The line of George Nulty, Devin Purcell, and Griffin Davis was exceptional, with 11 points from 4 goals and 7 assists. Marcel Stork scored a breakaway shorthanded goal and Gavin Wiech stopped 45 shots enroute to netting the Muskies.

The Wildcats are captained this year by Royce Teall (C), Marcel Stork (A), and Ben Edington (A).

The team has jumped out to an 11-0 start this season using balanced scoring across multiple lines, major offensive contributions from the defense and solid goaltending.

Mattawan ski team set for huge season

By John Raffel
Correspondent

MATTAWAN —Mattawan High School ski coach Jennifer Roethlisberger likes her team's prospects in theSouthwest Michigan Ski Conference

Please answer extensively

"Our boys team was league champions for the 4th year in a row," she said. "The girls were also champions for the second year in a row. We had three athletes, Canyon Keller, Addison Bell and Anna Hoogerheide, qualify for the state meet. Anna Hoogerheidge took 3rd in Giant Slalom.

"Canyon Keller and Nolan Mayo were big contributors to the mens side. Delaney Riddle is going to be hard to replace with her work ethic and leadership on the girls side. All three were in the top 15 in the league for both Slalom and Giant Slalom finishers. Canyon held the top spot."

Key skiers this year, are JT Roethlisberger, Addison Bell, Anna Hoogerheide, Avery Huff and Tessa Brown who will all will be leaders on our team.

"They should be finishing in the top of our league. We also have an exchange student Julie Navritrolova that is expected to be a huge contributor as well. Mason Allen and Noah Bentz are our other returning varsity players on the boys side," Roethlisberger said.

"We expect the girls to have another very good season. We have top returners and add in some experience from exchange students this girls team will be tough to beat. Our boys team will struggle this year. One of our top athletes, Nico Guyman, had an ACL injury during track season and is unable to compete this year. This is a big loss for us. We are hoping to qualify the girls team for the state meet as well as some individual boys."

Roethlisberger added: "We have an amazing team that works together. We have leaders on the team that really watch out and help those that are new this year or new to the sport. Being confident agressive skiers is what we are always working on."

As for the conference, "Our girls team should win the league," Roethlisberger said. "Of our returners, five of them were in the top 15 overall last year. Our boys team will struggle this year. Kalamazoo United and Vicksburg Hackett have very strong teams with a lot of depth. We do not have the same depth this year that we have had the last 4 years.

"We are really looking forward to this season. The boys are rebuilding but we have the hope of surprising people."

Bloomingdale boys beat Centreville

By John Raffel
Correspondent

BLOOMINGDALE — Mark Parsley is head coach Bloomingdale boys basketball coach and his team won on Dec. 5 over Centreville 59-43

For Bloomindale, Javon Pittsley had 22 points, Aiden Byers 13 points, Chayse Ciborski 9, Patrick Robinson 7 and Zach Danes 6.

Bloomingdale overcame an early deficit to snap a long skid, defeating Centreville 59–43 for their first win over the Bulldogs since 2019. The Cardinals trailed 19–20 at halftime but came out of the locker room with renewed energy, turning the game around in the second half.

Javon Pittsley led the way with 22 points, attacking the basket and setting the tone for the comeback. Aiden Byers added 13 points, providing steady scoring and keeping Bloomingdale within striking distance. In the fourth quarter, Chase Ciborski erupted for 9 points, all scored in the final period, helping the Cardinals seal the win.

Patrick Robinson contributed seven points and pulled down double-digit rebounds, and Zach Danes added six points.

"Bloomingdale's defense made the difference in the second half, forcing turnovers, controlling the glass, and limiting Centreville's second-chance opportunities. The Cardinals' late surge turned a one-point halftime deficit into a 16-point victory, ending a six-year drought against a tough conference rival," Parsley said

Bloomingdale goes to 2-0 (1-0 in the SW 10 conference).

Lawrence basketball team wins

By John Raffel
Correspondent

LAWRENCE — Lawrence coach Noah Wiswary was happy with his boys basketball performance on Dec 5.

The team won 50-39 over Decatur

Lawrence delivered an impressive defensive performance on Friday, limiting Decatur to just 39 points and controlling the game on that end of the floor from start to finish. Despite some early offensive struggles, the Tigers regrouped after halftime and found a spark in the third quarter. Alex Gardner and Xavier Glover powered the turnaround, scoring 17 and 16 points respectively.

Lawrence is at Bangor Tuesday Dec. 9 and at Centreville Friday Dec. 12.

Lawrence's overall record is 2-0; Conference 1-0.

Gobles wrestlers place second

By John Raffel
Correspondent

GOBLES — Gobles placed 2nd at the Concord Invitational Saturday.

Stat leaders—Dominic Redaway led the team with 6 Takedowns and 3 pins. Danny Timms, Devin Doorlag, and Brody Marshall each had one Technical Fall.

"Due to illness, Gobles only sent 8 to the Grover Invitational," coach Erin Carlin said. "Six of those

eight made it to the finals, and one made it to the consolation finals

"Danny Timms and Devin Doorlag earned

gold. Hunter Piper, Bryce Doorlag, Finn Carlin, and Colton Colingsworth earned Silver.

"Danny Timms was dominant throughout the tournament with five takedowns, one Pin and one Tech Fall," Carlin said.

Gobles has 2 SAC Duals against Parchment and Galesburg on Dec. 10 at Parchment. Conference and overall record is 1-1.

Performance Series presents Vox GR Choral Ensemble in concert

SOUTH HAVEN – A holiday music tradition continues Sunday, December 21, when the South Haven Performance Series presents Vox GR, the premier professional choral ensemble in West Michigan.

Since its founding in 2010 the Performance Series has concluded its season by celebrating the holidays with a concert free of charge to the public. Donations toward the 2026 Series are accepted.

The 4 p.m. concert will be presented at Peace Lutheran Church, 06321 Blue Star Memorial Hwy, South Haven, MI 49090.

Vox GR, led by Artistic Director Dr. Christopher Mason, was formed in 2022 and all the ensemble's members are professional singers who reside in Michigan.

Vox GR performs a wide repertoire of choral music stretching across all eras from composers of diverse backgrounds.

The concert program theme is Northern Lights: Journey to the North with Vox GR it will be centered around tunes that celebrate nature, the winter season, and Christmas. Ranging from traditional carols and African American Spiritual, to pieces sung in Latin, German and Tagalong, the concert culminates in a celebration of the northern lights as recalled in Latvian folk song and the journals of arctic explorers.

Vox GR has the mission of enriching West Michigan through compelling performances, community music making, and educational engagement for diverse populations. They seek to transform their audience with high-caliber choral music that moves the heart, engages the intellect, and honors our diversity.

Vox GR was named the 2024 American Prize second place winner in the Professional Choir Division. The American Prize program rewards the best recorded performances by individual artists and ensembles in the United States at the professional, community/amateur, college, university, church and school levels.

Christopher Mason is Director of Choral Activities at the University of Minnesota Duluth where he directs the flagship University Singers and teaches secondary choral methods, conducting, and ear training.

"We're delighted to share wonder, mystery, and joy as expressed in the intimate expressions of the human voice," said Mason. "We believe in the power of music, presented in this intimate way, to affect listeners deeply. In a world where busyness is pervasive, we hope this experience moves your hearts, engages your minds, and reunites you with your own inner stillness and eternal beauty."

The South Haven Performance Series is an all-volunteer community-based organization committed to providing a rich mixture of musical arts for area residents and visitors. Most concerts are held during the summer months with the additional holiday concert.

Performances are provided thanks to the generous support of the South Haven Community Foundation, corporate sponsors, and individual donors. Vox GR is supported by The Michigan Arts and Culture Council and the National Endowment for the Arts.

Bronson South Haven Hospital awards scholarships to three

Brandy Kelley

Brooklyn Blodgett

By James Windell

It was recently announced that 12 employees at Bronson South Haven Hospital were awarded a total of $15,000 in scholarships to advance their healthcare careers.

For Brandy Kelley, a medical assistant in the Orthopedics Department, winning a scholarship allowed her to graduate with an Associates Degree in Business from DeVry University without a large debt hanging over her head.

And for Brooklyn Blodgett, being awarded a scholarship helped her relieve some of the financial burden of paying for tuition at Baker College. "I have a passion for learning," Blodgett said in a recent interview, "and this money allowed me to continue my education." Blodgett works for Bronson Healthcare Group supporting patient safety and quality.

Both Kelley and Blodgett are long-term employees of the Bronson healthcare system. As a medical assistant, Kelley supports physicians and nurses by performing both administrative and clinical tasks such as patient intake, vital signs, scheduling, and assisting with procedures. Blodgett, who works for Bronson Healthcare Group, is an administrator who supports patient safety and quality in Van Buren County.

Kelley and Blodgett each received scholarships of just over $2,000. By graduating from DeVry University, Kelley will be able to continue pursing her long-term goal. "My end goal is to become a Practice Manager in the future," Kelley said. A Practice Manager oversees the daily operations of medical clinics, ensuring smooth patient care, efficient staff management, and compliance with healthcare standards.

Blodgett says she is satisfied with her current position. However, she indicates that the scholarship was important for her to continue her education. "I've always had a passion for learning and a passion for Bronson, as well as a constant desire to improve myself," she says. "Not only to better myself but also better my future for my family and the scholarship was a great contribution to that."

The scholarships were made possible thanks to the South Haven Health System Legacy Donor Advised Fund, established in 2021 through Bronson Health Foundation. The mission of the scholarship is to provide financial assistance to Bronson South Haven Hospital employees, particularly lower income employees, who are seeking to advance their career at Bronson.

Blodgett and Kelley are very appreciative of being awarded the scholarships. Blodgett said that working at Bronson has been a great experience. "Throughout the years, I've been able to gain a great deal of experience by working in different departments and different facilities while learning various aspects of patient care."

Kelley said she, too, was thankful that Bronson gave her so many opportunities. "I didn't go to college right after high school," she says. "I started later after I had my family and I am just so very thankful that Bronson gave me the opportunity to be in the position that I'm in today."

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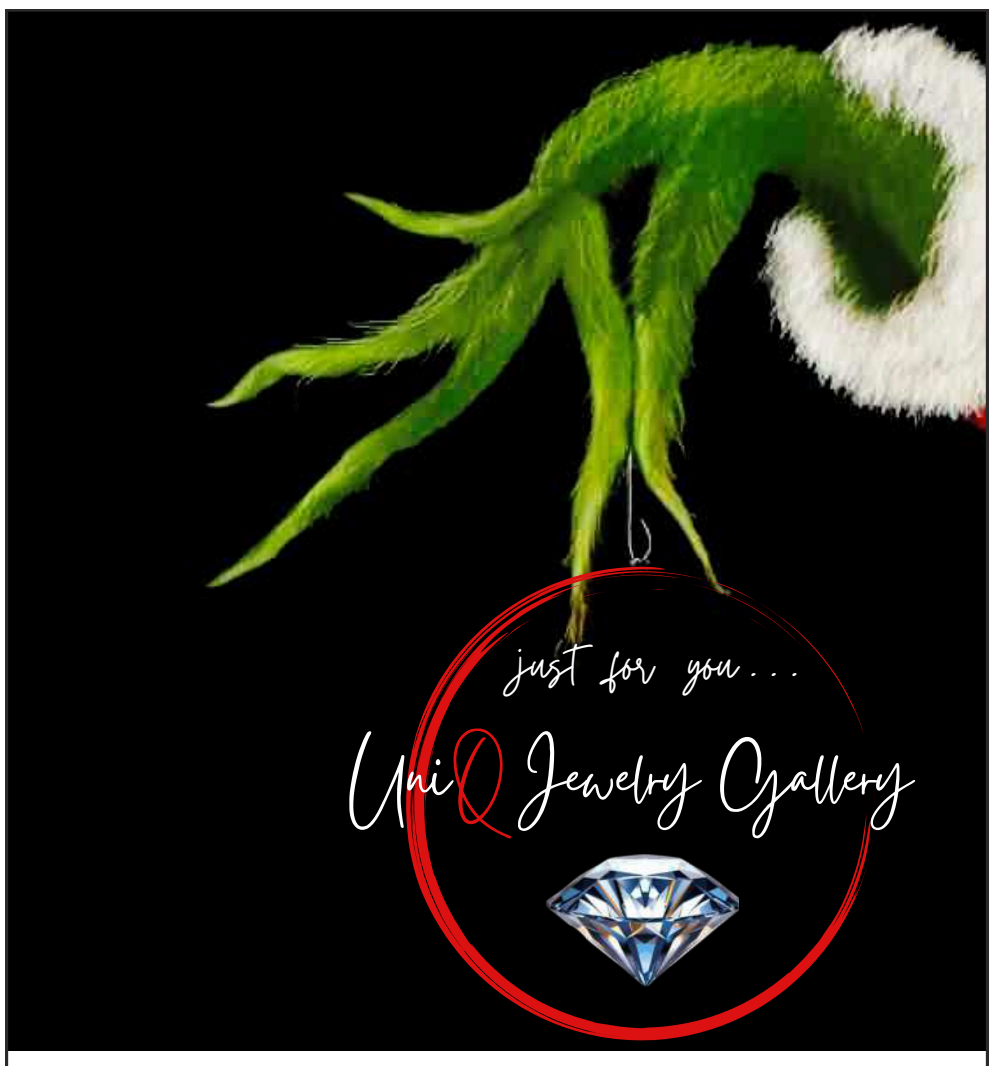
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OBITUARIES

Charlene Marie Treadway

Charlene Marie Treadway, 74, of Lawton, passed away following a short illness on Thursday, Nov. 27, 2025, at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Kalamazoo. She was born June 20, 1951, in Paw Paw, Mich., the daughter of Merritt Raymond Sr. and Betty (Moon) Raymond.

Charlene was a hard worker and worked at Duo-Tang and Welch's for many years. Later, she worked at Big T, Lawton, and became a caretaker for the elderly. She enjoyed gardening and taking care of her flowers. Most of all, Charlene was a talented cook, and everyone enjoyed her food! She had many recipes that she made that had been passed down throughout her family. Charlene will be deeply missed.

She is survived by her son, Aaron (Lisa) Treadway; grandchildren, Zackary Moon, Devin Black, Jacob Black and Harley Teague; brothers, Jim (Shirley) Raymond, Larry (Cindy) Raymond and David (Nicole Smoot) Raymond; sisters, Cathy (Raymond) Piecyk and Betty Padgett; brother-in-law, Ken Butler, and many nieces and nephews.

Charlene was preceded in death by her parents, significant other, David "Skip" Schippers; sisters, Cheryl Butler and Sherry Raymond, and brother, Merritt "Sam" Raymond, Jr.

Cremation will take place. A celebration of Charlene's life will take place at Big T, 155 N. Main St., Lawton, on Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026, at 3 p.m.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

Robert John "Tink" Timkovich Sr.

Robert John "Tink" Timkovich, Sr., 81, of Kalamazoo, passed away on Wednesday, Nov. 26, 2025, at Bronson Methodist Hospital, Kalamazoo, after a courageous battle with prostate and pancreatic cancer. He was born in Santa Monica, California, on April 29, 1944, the son of the late John and Mary (Dillenbeck) Timkovich.

Robert was a graduate of Loy Norrix High School, where he excelled in wrestling. He retired from Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home after 20-plus years. Robert loved fishing at his home on Huzzy Lake, woodworking, building dune buggies, and hunting at his farm in Lawrence. He loved to plant gardens of vegetables and share with his family and friends.

On April 19, 1968, he married Mary Lou Webb who survives him, and they spent 57 years together.

In addition to his wife, Mary Lou, he is also survived by his son, Robert John "Bobber" Timkovich, Jr.; one sister, Rose (Randy) Brondyke of Holland; brother-in-law, James Oros of Kalamazoo; many nieces and nephews; special friend, Courtney Gass, and many more friends who were like family, there are too many to mention, but you know who you are.

Cremation will take place. In accordance with Robert's wishes, there will be no public services at this time.

Memorial contributions may be directed to West Michigan Cancer Center.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at: adamspawpaw.com

Edmund Edward Uminn

Edmund Edward Uminn, 82, of Paw Paw, passed away Saturday, Nov. 29, 2025, at Beacon Hospital, Kalamazoo. He was born Feb. 10, 1943, in Gobles, Mich., one of 15 children to Walter Stanley Uminn and Henrietta (Laning) Uminn.

Ed was a very proud veteran of the United States Air Force. He bravely served his country from 1961-1967.

He was the owner of Kalamazoo Fence Company. He also was a beekeeper and enjoyed canning honey for his family, friends and neighbors. He was an avid gardener and grew countless different fruits, vegetables and herbs to share with others. Ed could often be found frequenting the local restaurants, seeking out a good meal.

He was a jokester and wise guy. He was always teasing people to try and make them laugh and was always successful at it! Where others saw rust, dust, and worn-out items, Ed saw possibility. Whether it was tools, equipment, trucks or other objects, he saw the potential and always tried to restore them and give them a second chance to shine.

He is survived by his wife, Gail (Masten) Uminn; biological daughter, Theresa (Uminn) Hoyt; daughter, Leslie (Craig) Owens; grandchildren, Tommy, Ally, Cody, Carli and Cory, along with many nieces and nephews.

Edmund was preceded in death by his parents and son, Stephen Rabb.

Ed will be laid to rest privately in Almena Cemetery.

Share a memory or sign the online guestbook at adamspawpaw.com

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201 W. Michigan Avenue
Pastor Mark Roberts
www.newhopefellowship.org
SUNDAY
Morning Worship - 10 a.m.

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PAW PAW SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CURCH
60409 South M-40
Pastor Sean Reed
Lawn Services - 10 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.pawpaw.church
Oline worship services on Facebook & YourTube

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PAW PAW UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
420 W. Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
269-657-7727
Pastor Dan Phillips
Sunday Service at 9:30 am

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RED ARROW MINISTRIES
31133 Red Arrow Highway
Rev. G. Ben Bowater, IV
Founding Pastor
SUNDAY Worship - 9:30 a.m. & 11 a.m.
www.redarrowministries.org for live stream worship

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ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
412 Cedar Street
Handicap Accessible
657-3762 • www.stmarkpawpaw.com
e-mail: stmarkspawpaw@gmail.com
Mailing Address:
P.O.Box 307, Paw Paw, MI 49079
SUNDAY Worship 9:30 a.m.

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ST. MARY'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
500 Paw Paw Street
Fr. Dave Pinto
657-4459
SATURDAY Vigil - 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY MASSES - 9AM & 11AM
Holy days & Daily Masses Consult Bulletin

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL
721 Pine Street
Pastor Phillip Phifer
Church: 657-4840
School: 657-5921
Sunday Services 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.

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TRUTH CHURCH
32560 56th Ave. • 657-5042
www.truthchurchpaw-paw.com
Pastor Steven Green
SUNDAY
School - 10 a.m.
Evening Service - 6 p.m.
THURSDAY Bible Study - 7 p.m.

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IGLESIA DEL ESPÍRITU SANTO/ CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT
30037 E Red Arrow Hwy., Bilingual
Pastors Maggie and Jay Salas
Domingo/Sunday: Adoración | Worship- 10 a.m.
Jueves/Thursday: Oracion/ Estudió Bíblico | Prayer/ Bible Study- 7 p.m.
(269) 377-6514
(269) 993-6727

LAWRENCE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Corner of Exchange & James Street • 674-8381
Pastor Doug Tipken
SUNDAY Worship - 11 a.m.
lawrencemethodist-church.org
for information of online videos

GOBLES

NORTHPOINT MINISTRIES OF GOBLES
04077 M40 • 269-628-9199
northpointgobles@gmail.com
Pastors: Gary Lounsberry & John Losen Jr.
Sunday: 11am - Morning Worship
Monday: 7 pm - REFRESH Bible Study
Wednesday: 7pm - Prayer Meeting

MARCELLUS

ST. MARGARET MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
296 E. Dibble St.
Rev. John Tran.
668-3312
SUNDAY - 9:45AM

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HARMONY CHAPEL
88067 C.R. 652 (In the SW corner of Porter Twp.)
Rev. Ron Packer
269-548-7348
Please join us as we continue to Worship in the Country
Since 1894
SUNDAY Service - 12:30 p.m.
For mor information or directions call:
Neal Ferguson: 269-624-6837
or
Ann Nesbitt: 269-624-6781

DECATUR

DECATUR BIBLE CHURCH
80797 M-51, Decatur • (269) 423-5111
Pastor Steven Pace
Sunday School 9:45 a.m.
Worship 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study & Prayer 5:00 p.m.
facebook.com/DecaturBibleChurch • http://www.decaturbible.org

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Decatur New Hope Community Church
319 ½ West Delaware Street
Pastor Ross Tarantino
SUNDAY • Worship Service-10:00 a.m.
TUESDAY • Bible Study-1:00 p.m.
269-423-8136
info@decaturnewhopecommunity.net

LAWTON

DAILY HARVEST MINISTRIES
117 S.Franklin Street
Pastor Jack Shanley
SUNDAY Worship - 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.
WEDNESDAY Bible Study - 6 p.m.

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IGLESIA PENTECOSTES
Eel Movimiento misionero Mundial, Inc.
Bilingual
117 S. Franklin Street
Pastors Arturo & Lourdez Hernandez
(616) 656-0137
SERVICES
Domingo - 9:30 a.m.
Martes y Jueves - 7:30 p.m.
Local: (269) 655-8071

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LAWTON EVANGELICAL CHURCH
425 S. Nursery Street, Lawton • 624-1524
Call if you need help in some way
www.lawtonevan.com
SUNDAY Worship Services - 10 a.m.
We offer Nursery and Children's Church

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NEW COMMUNITY CHURCH
502 N. Main Street, Lawton, MI 49065
Pastor Adam Potgiesser
Sunday Worship 10am
www.nc2online.com • facebook.com/nc2online
(269) 299-2003

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ST. PAUL'S UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
624-1050
Pastor Ashlei Horn
SUNDAY Worship - 10:00 a.m.
www.stpoulsumclawton.com
or on Facebook
www.Facebook.com/Lawton-St-Pauls-UMC

MATTAWAN

Calvary Community Church
7829 S. 5th St
Pastor Gregory VanHeukelom
375-6240 • www.calvaryreformed.org
Website: https://www.calvary-community.church/
Worship still 10 am Sunday with live Facebook
Jody's Closet, a free clothing ministry is open Mon/Tue 10am-12 and Thur 6-7:30pm And the 1st Saturday of the month 8:30-10am.••••

FAITH BAPTIST CHURCH
56070 Murray Street
Pastor Chuck Rawsthorne
SUNDAY
School - 9:30 a.m.
Morning Service - 10:30 a.m.
(In person and on Facebook)

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MATTAWAN COMMUNITY CHURCH
23680 Front Ave.
668-3263 • www.mattawancc.com
mattawancommunitychurch@gmail.com
Pastor Eric Baird
SUNDAYS AT 10:25 A.M

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ST. JOHN BOSCO CATHOLIC CHURCH
23830 Front Ave.
Rev. John Tran
668-3312 • www.stjbparish.com
Sunday Mass times to 8:00 AM & 11:30 AM Saturday Vigil 4:00PM

DIRECTORY OF CHURCH SERVICES IS PROVIDED BY THE FOLLOWING SPONSORS

THE CLOTHES BASKET
314 Paw Paw Street
Paw Paw • 657-6441

BRONSON LakeView Hospital
408 Hazen Street
Paw Paw • 657-3141

CAMPBELL MURCH CEMETERY MEMORIALS, INC.
56556 Main Street
Mattawan • 668-3350

HIEMSTRA OPTICAL CO.
Michael Houser & staff
133 E. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-4511

DE SMIA Insurance Agency, INC.
130 N. Main Street
Lawton • 624-4411

St Julian winery • distillery
Michigan's Oldest & Largest Winery
716 S. Kalamazoo Street
Paw Paw • 657-5568

Adams Funeral Home and Cremation Services
ADAMS FUNERAL HOME
Serving the Community Since 1948
504 W. Michigan Avenue
Paw Paw • 657-6347

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Nancy E Reinhardt; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 14MI00682-5; Insurer: (unknown)
FORECLOSURE NOTICE
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by Nancy E. Reinhardt, single to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Countrywide Home Loans, Inc., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 26, 2006, and recorded on November 7, 2006, in Liber 1472, Page 464, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-22 by an Assignment of Mortgage dated May 04, 2012 and recorded May 14, 2012 in Liber 1567, Page 462, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty-Two and 53/100 ($149,862.53) including interest at the rate of 3.00000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Beginning on the North line of Section 36, Town 2 South, Range 13 West at a point 430.00 feet South 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds West of the Northeast corner of the Section; thence South 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds West on the Section line, 153 feet; thence South 01 degrees 10 minutes 20 seconds East parallel with the East Section line, 462.00 feet; thence North 88 degrees 45 minutes 57 seconds East 153.00 feet; thence North 01 degrees 10 minutes 20 seconds West 462.00 feet to the place of beginning. Commonly known as: 22185 44TH AVE, MATTAWAN, MI 49071 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: December 11, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for The Bank of New York Mellon FKA The Bank of New York, as Trustee for the Certificateholders of the CWABS, Inc., Asset-Backed Certificates, Series 2006-22 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 14MI00682-5

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Terry M. Gordnier; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 526346F01; Insurer: (unkown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Terry M. Gordnier, a single man
Original Mortgagee: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for lender and lender's successors and/or assigns
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): GITSIT Solutions, LLC, not in its individual capacity but solely in its capacity as Separate Trustee of GV Trust 2025-1
Date of Mortgage: December 31, 2013
Date of Mortgage Recording: January 13, 2014
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $75,567.57
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Commencing at the West Quarter Post of Section 22 Town 2 South Range 13 West; thence East on the East and West quarter line 163 feet; thence South 00 degrees 27 minutes 30 seconds West 209 feet; thence West 163 feet to the West Section line; thence North 00 degrees 27 minutes 30 seconds East on same to beginning.
Common street address (if any): 27939 38th Ave, Paw Paw, MI 49079-9429
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a; or, if the subject real property is used for agricultural purposes as defined by MCL 600.3240(16).
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice:
December 11, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1579567

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: James Marble; Atty: Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates - Johnson, Blumberg, and Associates ; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: MI 25 6843; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE BY ADVERTISEMENT.
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE INFORMATION: Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by James Marble, a single man, whose address is 410 East Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079, as original Mortgagors, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Rocket Mortgage, LLC, being a mortgage dated February 6, 2024, and recorded on February 13, 2024 in Liber 1761 Page 885, Van Buren County Records, State of Michigan and then assigned to Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC, as assignee as documented by an assignment dated November 25, 2025 and recorded on November 26, 2025 in Liber 1786 Page 619, Van Buren County Records, Michigan, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of EIGHTY-NINE THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SIXTEEN AND 07/100 DOLLARS ($89,416.07). Said premises are situated in the Village of Paw Paw, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, and are described as: LOT 6 AND THE WEST 20 FEET OF LOT 7, BLOCK 29, THE VILLAGE OF PAW PAW, ACCORDING TO THE RECORDED PLAT THEREOF, AS RECORDED IN LIBER E OF DEEDS, PAGE 566, VAN BUREN COUNTY. Street Address: 410 East Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079 The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA § 600.3241a in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of the sale. If the property is sold at a foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCLA § 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. THIS FIRM IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT AND ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: IF YOU ARE A MILITARY SERVICE MEMBER ON ACTIVE DUTY, IF YOUR PERIOD OF ACTIVE DUTY HAS CONCLUDED LESS THAN 90 DAYS AGO, OR IF YOU HAVE BEEN ORDERED TO ACTIVE DUTY, PLEASE CONTACT THE ATTORNEY FOR THE PARTY FORECLOSING THE MORTGAGE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER STATED IN THIS NOTICE.
Dated: December 11, 2025
For more information, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing: Robert A. Blumberg (P87490), Johnson, Blumberg, & Associates, LLC, 30 North LaSalle St., Suite 3650 Chicago, Illinois, 60602. Telephone: (312) 541-9710 File No.: MI 25 6843

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: 7338 HARDISTY LLC; Atty: ROBERTSON ANSCHUT SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS - ROBERTSON ANSCHUTZ SCHNEID CRANE & PARTNERS; 1st Pub: 12/11/2025; Atty File #: 25-303401; Insurer: (unknown)
ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC, MAY BE DEEMED A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT.
ANY INFORMATION WE OBTAIN WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. PLEASE CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450, Alpharetta, GA 30004 ph:470-321-7112 Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in VAN BUREN County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on January 08, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information: Name of the mortgagor: Adam Wright, as Manager of 7338 Hardisty LLC. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by 7338 HARDISTY LLC, to INVESTOR MORTGAGE FINANCE LLC, original Mortgagee, for a mortgage dated June 30, 2022, and recorded on July 12, 2022, in Liber 1740 Page 708 in the Van Buren County Register of Deeds. Said mortgage was assigned by said Mortgagee through mesne assignments to U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF THE LB-TIKI SERIES VI TRUST, as documented by an assignment of mortgage dated September 3, 2025, and recorded on October 31, 2025, in Liber 1785 Page 578 in the VAN BUREN County Register of Deeds, on which Mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $624,549.83. Under the power of sale contained in said Mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue, at the place of holding the Circuit Court within VAN BUREN County, Michigan on January 08, 2026 at 1:00 p.m. Said premises are located in the city of GOBLES in VAN BUREN County, Michigan and are described as: SITUATED IN THE TOWNSHIP OF PINE GROVE, COUNTY OF VAN BUREN, AND STATE OF MICHIGAN: PART OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF SECTION 14, TOWN 1 SOUTH, RANGE 13 WEST, DESCRIBED AS BEGINNING AT THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF SAID SECTION 14; THENCE SOUTH ALONG THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 45 SECONDS EAST, PARALLEL WITH THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET; THENCE NORTH PARALLEL WITH THE WEST LINE OF SAID SECTION, 660.00 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF SECTION 14; THENCE NORTH 89 DEGREES 37 MINUTES 45 SECONDS WEST, ALONG SAID NORTH LINE, 660.00 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING.
Property Address: 8221 26TH ST. GOBLES MI, 49055 Tax ID No. 80-15-014-011-02 The redemption period shall be Six (6) months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If this property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the Mortgage sale or to the Mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. U.S. BANK TRUST NATIONAL ASSOCIATION, AS TRUSTEE OF THE LB-TIKI SERIES VI TRUST, Mortgagee/Assignee December 11th, 2025 ROBERTSON, ANSCHUTZ, SCHNEID, CRANE & PARTNERS, PLLC Attorney for Mortgagee/ Assignee 13010 Morris Road, Suite 450 Alpharetta, GA 30004 Telephone: 470-321-7112 Facsimile: 404-393-1425 Service Email: MIFCLTeam@raslg.com

(12-11)(01-01)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Mary Dykstra; Atty: Team X; 1st Pub: 12/4/2025; Atty File #: 515603F02; Insurer: (unknown)
Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement
Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information:
Name(s) of the mortgagor(s): Marvin D. Dykstra, a married man and Mary L. Dykstra, a married woman husband and wife
Original Mortgagee: Washington Mortgage Company, a Michigan Corporation
Foreclosing Assignee (if any): HSBC Bank USA, National Association as Trustee in Trust for Citigroup Mortgage Loan Trust Inc., asset backed pass through certificates series 2003-HE3
Date of Mortgage: May 14, 1999
Date of Mortgage Recording: May 20, 1999
Amount claimed due on date of notice: $15,037.35
Description of the mortgaged premises: Situated in Township of Almena, Van Buren County, Michigan, and described as: Lot 11, Green Acres, according to the plat thereof as recorded in Liber 7 of Plats, on Page 38 in Van Buren County Records.
Common street address (if any): 39388 Sandyridge Cir, Mattawan, MI 49071-9750
The redemption period shall be 1 year from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241a.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale under Chapter 32 of the Revised Judicature Act of 1961, pursuant to MCL 600.3278 the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period.
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
This notice is from a debt collector.
Date of notice: December 4, 2025
Trott Law, P.C.
31440 Northwestern Hwy, Suite 145
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 642-2515
1578751

(12-04)(12-25)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Sawyer Stephan Brown; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-013829; Insurer: GNMA
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice.
Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Sawyer Stephan Brown, an unmarried man, to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Van Dyk Mortgage Corporation., its successors and assigns, Mortgagee, dated October 8, 2021 and recorded October 21, 2021 in Liber 1727, Page 827 Van Buren County Records, Michigan, and Affidavit Affecting Realty recorded November 21, 2025 in Liber 1786, Page 457 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of One Hundred Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy-Five and 58/100 Dollars ($108,975.58).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Village of Bloomingdale, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as: Commencing at the Northeast corner of Lot 102 of VILLAGE OF BLOOMINGDALE, according to the plat thereof, recorded in Liber 25 of Deeds on Page 10, in the Office for the Register of Deeds for Van Buren County Records; thence South 53 feet; thence West 66 feet; thence North 53 feet; thence East 66 feet to the place of beginning.
210 N Van Buren Street, Bloomingdale, Michigan 49026
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 27, 2025
File No. 25-013829
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Chelsea Nichole Selvidge; Atty: Schneiderman & Sherman, P.C. - Schneiderman & Sherman, PC; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-003295-1; Insurer: (unknown)
SHORT FORECLOSURE NOTICE - VAN BUREN COUNTY Notice of Foreclosure by Advertisement. Notice is given under section 49c of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, 1966 PA 346, MCL 125.1449c, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM, on January 08, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
MORTGAGE: Mortgagor(s): Chelsea Nichole Selvidge and Joshua Allen Beebe, wife and husband Original Mortgagee: The Huntington National Bank Date of mortgage: May 21, 2024 Recorded on May 31, 2024, Liber 1766, on Page 422, Foreclosing Assignee (if any): Michigan State Housing Development Authority Amount claimed to be due at the date hereof: One Hundred Eighty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty-Eight and 28/100 Dollars ($189,728.28)
Mortgaged premises: Situated in Van Buren County, and described as: BEGINNING ON THE CENTER LINE OF MAIN STREET AT A POINT 297 FEET EASTERLY FROM THE INTERSECTION OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SECTION; THENCE NORTH 484.4 FEET; THENCE WEST 40 FEET; THENCE SOUTH TO THE CENTER LINE OF SAID STREET; THENCE EASTERLY TO BEGINNING, EXCEPT MAIN STREET RIGHT-OF-WAY, ALL BEING IN SECTION 16 TOWN 3 SOUTH, RANGE 16 WEST. Commonly known as 519 W Main Street, Hartford, MI 49057 The redemption period will be 6 month from the date of such sale, unless abandoned under MCL 125.1449v, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale, or 15 days from the MCL 125.1449v(b) notice, whichever is later; or unless extinguished pursuant to MCL 600.3238. Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Michigan State Housing Development Authority Mortgagee/Assignee
Schneiderman & Sherman P.C.
23938 Research Dr, Suite 300
Farmington Hills, MI 48335
248.539.7400
1578606

(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Mtgr: Sandra E. McGwin-Kelly; Atty: Orlans; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-011907; Insurer: (unknown)
Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information.
Default has been made in the conditions of a mortgage made by Kevin Jon Kelly and Sandra E. McGwin-Kelly, husband and wife, to Chemical Bank Shoreline, Mortgagee, dated June 18, 2001 and recorded June 25, 2001 in Liber 1334, Page 313 Van Buren County Records, Michigan. Said mortgage is now held by CSMC 2021-RPL6 Trust, by assignment. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Seventy-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Seventy-Seven and 95/100 Dollars ($78,677.95).
Under the power of sale contained in said mortgage and the statute in such case made and provided, notice is hereby given that said mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at public venue at the place of holding the circuit court within Van Buren County, Michigan at 1:00 PM on JANUARY 8, 2026.
Said premises are located in the Township of Arlington, Van Buren County Michigan, and are described as:
THE NORTH HALF OF THE NORTH HALF OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF THE SOUTHEAST QUARTER OF SECTION 4, TOWN 2 SOUTH, RANGE 15 WEST.
26508 52nd St, Bangor, Michigan 49013
The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA §600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale.
If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period.
Dated: November 27, 2025
File No. 25-011907
Firm Name: Orlans Law Group PLLC
Firm Address: 1650 West Big Beaver Road, Troy MI 48084
Firm Phone Number: (248) 502.1400

(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: Lisa Breur; Atty: BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS - BETTER CHOICE NOTICE SOLUTIONS; 1st Pub: 11/27/2025; Atty File #: 25-29362; Insurer: (unknown)
NOTICE OF MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE SALE Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following Mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, on January 8, 2026. The amount due on the Mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a Mortgage made by Lisa Breur and Timothy Breur to Equity Prime Mortgage LLC dated September 22, 2021 and recorded September 27, 2021 in Liber 1726 at Page 491,

Continues on page B5

WANTED

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THIS NEWSPAPER is looking for sales representatives to call on local businesses and sell them advertisements in our area newspapers.

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wilcoxnewspapers@gmail.com for more info

Three new sergeants sworn in by South Haven Police

By James Windell

Newly promoted Police Chief Adam DeBoer and three new sergeants were sworn in at the South Haven City Council meeting on Monday, December 1, 2025.

Joining DeBoer in the ceremony in which they received their badges and were sworn in were three officers recently promoted to sergeants: Sgt. Kevin Wildey; Sgt. Lucas Keene; and Sgt. Michael Ledger.

In introducing the three officers, Chief DeBoer said that he was "very pleased to have them on my leadership team."

All three of the new sergeants have been recognized in past years for their contributions to training, community relations, safety, and service to residents.

In administering the code of ethics to the officers, City Clerk Megan Kiker had all four raise their right hands and swear to abide by the oath which begins with: "As a police officer my fundamental duty is to serve the residents and visitors of South Haven with integrity, fairness and professionalism."

As part of the code of ethics, the officers agreed to "keep my private life unsullied as an example to my fellow officers and community. I will maintain calm and courage in the face of danger, scorn or criticism."

=• PUBLIC NOTICE •=

Continues from page B4

Van Buren County, Michigan. Said Mortgage is now held by Freedom Mortgage Corporation by assignment and/or merger. There is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of $169,151.31. Said premises are located in Van Buren County, Michigan and are described as: The land referred to in this instrument, situated in the Village of Mattawan, County of Van Buren, State of Michigan, is described as follows: Lot 9, Block 3, Original Plat of the Village of Mattawan, Van Buren County, Michigan, according to the recorded plat in Liber G of Plats, Page 444, Van Buren County Records. Parcel ID No(s).: 80-46-010-033-00 Said property is commonly known as 24238 Front Ave, Mattawan, MI 49071. The redemption period shall be 6 months from the date of such sale, unless determined abandoned in accordance with MCLA 600.3241a, in which case the redemption period shall be 30 days from the date of such sale. If the property is sold at foreclosure sale, pursuant to MCL 600.3278, the borrower will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damage to the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages, if any, are limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Please be advised that any third party purchaser is responsible for preparing and recording the Sheriff's Deed. If this is a residential Mortgage, the following shall apply: ATTENTION HOMEOWNER: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. THIS COMMUNICATION IS FROM A DEBT COLLECTOR. THIS IS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT, AND ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. IF YOU: ARE A DEBTOR IN AN ACTIVE BANKRUPTCY CASE; ARE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF A BANKRUPTCY STAY; OR, HAVE RECEIVED A DISCHARGE IN BANKRUPTCY AND YOU HAVE NOT REAFFIRMED THE DEBT, THIS NOTICE IS FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY AND SHOULD NOT BE CONSTRUED AS AN ATTEMPT TO COLLECT A DEBT FROM YOU PERSONALLY. Dated: November 20, 2025 Attorney for the party foreclosing the Mortgage: Thomas E. McDonald (P39312) Brock & Scott, PLLC 5431 Oleander Drive Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (844) 856-6646 File No. 25-29362

(11-27)(12-18)

County: Van Buren; Mtgr: John F Crawford; Atty: Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. - Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C.; 1st Pub: 11/20/2025; Atty File #: 25MI00779-1; Insurer: (unknown)

FORECLOSURE NOTICE

Attention homeowner: If you are a military service member on active duty, if your period of active duty has concluded less than 90 days ago, or if you have been ordered to active duty, please contact the attorney for the party foreclosing the mortgage at the telephone number stated in this notice. Notice of foreclosure by advertisement. Notice is given under section 3212 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.3212, that the following mortgage will be foreclosed by a sale of the mortgaged premises, or some part of them, at a public auction sale to the highest bidder for cash or cashier's check at the place of holding the circuit court in Van Buren County, starting promptly at 01:00 PM, December 18, 2025. The amount due on the mortgage may be greater on the day of the sale. Placing the highest bid at the sale does not automatically entitle the purchaser to free and clear ownership of the property. A potential purchaser is encouraged to contact the county register of deeds office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge a fee for this information. Default has been made in the conditions of a certain mortgage made by John F. Crawford, a single man to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as Mortgagee, as Nominee for Amerifirst Financial Corporation, its successors, and assigns, Mortgagee, dated September 5, 2019, and recorded on September 20, 2019, in Liber 1689, Page 612, Van Buren County Records, said mortgage was assigned to Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC by an Assignment of Mortgage dated October 22, 2025 and recorded October 29, 2025 in Liber 1785, Page 493, on which mortgage there is claimed to be due at the date hereof the sum of Twenty-Nine Thousand Six Hundred Fifty-Five and 90/100 ($29,655.90) including interest at the rate of 5.75000% per annum. Said premises are situated in the Township of HAMILTON, Van Buren County, Michigan, and are described as: Lots 34 and 35, Supervisor`s Plat Of Ackley Beach, as recorded in Liber 1, Page 29, Van Buren County Records. Commonly known as: 46800 EAST DR, DECATUR, MI 49045 If the property is eventually sold at foreclosure sale, the redemption period will be 6.00 months from the date of sale unless the property is abandoned or used for agricultural purposes. If the property is determined abandoned in accordance with MCL 600.3241 and/or 600.3241a, the redemption period will be 30 days from the date of sale, or 15 days after statutory notice, whichever is later. If the property is presumed to be used for agricultural purposes prior to the date of the foreclosure sale pursuant to MCL 600.3240, the redemption period is 1 year. Pursuant to MCL 600.3278, if the property is sold at a foreclosure sale, the borrower(s) will be held responsible to the person who buys the property at the mortgage foreclosure sale or to the mortgage holder for damaging the property during the redemption period. TO ALL PURCHASERS: The foreclosing mortgagee can rescind the sale. In that event, your damages are, if any, limited solely to the return of the bid amount tendered at sale, plus interest. Dated: November 20, 2025 Randall S. Miller & Associates, P.C. Attorneys for Carrington Mortgage Services, LLC 43252 Woodward Avenue, Suite 180, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302, (248) 335-9200 Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Case No. 25MI00779-1

(11-20)(12-11)

NOTICE OF PUBLIC SALE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Notice is hereby given that The Shed Self Storage, phone (269) 200-2156, located at 72819 M 40, Lawton, MI, 49065 will hold a Public Sale, to satisfy the lien of the owner. This notice is given in accordance with the provisions of Michigan Compiled Statutes 570.521 to 570.527. Units will be sold via online auction, at www.LockerFox.com. Auction will close on or after Wednesday December 24, 2025 at 10:00 am.

The personal goods stored therein by the following may include, but are not limited to household goods, furniture, tools, equipment, toys, boxes, clothes and misc items. Owner reserves the right to bid and the right to refuse bids. Cleanup deposit is required. Sale is subject to cancellation. The contents of the rental storage units belonging to the following persons will be sold:

Gordon Becker
Adam Gajawski

PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

To: The residents and property owners of Pine Grove Township, Van Buren County, Michigan and any other interested persons.

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the Zoning Board of Appeals of Pine Grove Township will hold a meeting and public hearing on Friday January 9, 2026 commencing at 3:00 p.m., at the Pine Grove Township Hall, 26520 CR 388, within the Township, to consider the following:

1. Variance request by applicants Daniel and Danielle Hinson, for a 1.233 acre variance to the minimum parcel size of 2 acres to allow for a land division creating a 0.767 acre parcel. The parent parcel is owned by Becky VanHeukelum and is located at 31430 CR 388, Gobles, MI 49055. The Parcel ID is 80-15-020-010-21 and is approximately 13.95 acres in size. The parcel is in the A – Agricultural zoning district. Section 6.0 of the Township Zoning Ordinance contains the minimum size of properties in the A zoning district. Section 11.03 of the zoning ordinance sets the standards for review of the request.
2. Such other business as may properly come before the Zoning Board of Appeals at said hearing.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the ZBA intends to hold its meeting in person at the Township Hall. All persons are invited to attend and participate regarding the above request.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that the application and Zoning Ordinance can be reviewed by contacting the Township Clerk and will also be available at the hearing. Written comments may be submitted to the Township Clerk at the address set forth below up to 12:00 p.m. on the date of said hearing and will further be received by the Zoning Board of Appeals at the time of said hearing.

PLEASE TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that individuals with disabilities requiring auxiliary aids or services should contact the office of the Township Clerk by writing or calling the Clerk at the contact information below at least five (5) days prior to the hearing.

PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS
Michelle Meert, Township Clerk
26520 CR 388, Gobles, MI 49055
269-628-5393

Van Buren Intermediate School District NOTICE OF VACANCY

The Van Buren Intermediate School District is seeking applications/letter of interest for the current vacant position on the Board of Education. An individual will be appointed to fill the vacant position until the **June 30, 2029,** Biennial election.

Individuals must submit an application expressing interest in the Board position no later than **11:59 pm on Thursday, December 18, 2025.** The Application can be found at **www.vbisd.org** under EMPLOYMENT on the home page.

Following a review of the submitted materials, the Board will schedule interviews with selected candidates for Monday, January 5, 2026. Not all applicants for the board vacancy may be interviewed. If you have any questions concerning the role of the Board of Education and the responsibilities of a Board member, please contact David Manson, Superintendent of Van Buren ISD.

TIMELINE

Thursday, December 4, 2025	Notice of vacancy advertised.
Thursday, December 18, 2025	Deadline for submitting applications.
Monday, January 5, 2026	Board meets to review applications and hold interviews.
Wednesday, January 7, 2026	Board makes an appointment of the new Board member.

To be eligible, a person must be a registered voter and resident in the schools served by Van Buren Intermediate School District, at least 18 years of age, a citizen of the U.S., a resident of the State of Michigan for at least 30 days,
490 South Paw Paw Street * Lawrence, Michigan 49064 * 269.674.8091/ Fax: 269.674.8030 * vbisd.org

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD AND PUBLIC HEARING

Van Buren County, Michigan will hold a Public Comment Period for the Van Buren County Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan ending with a Public Hearing on January 13, 2026 at 12:50 p.m. at the Van Buren County Administration Building at 219 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079.

The purpose of the comment period and public hearing is to invite and hear comments on the Van Buren County Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plan. At the hearing, all interested parties will have the opportunity to be heard and ask questions regarding the plan. All interested parties are urged to attend.

If you are unable to attend the public hearing, written comments can be submitted by email to **ranslerl@vanburencountymi.gov** or by mail to 219 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079 and must be received by January 13, 2025.

The proposed plan will be available for review during business hours at the Van Buren County Administration Building at 219 E. Paw Paw Street, Paw Paw, MI 49079, which is open Monday through Friday from 8:00am to 5:00pm. The plan is also available for review on the Internet at **https://www.swmpc.org/vb_rplans.asp**

FOR MORE INFO OR TO PLACE AN AD

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=• CLASSIFIEDS •=

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